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Access and Equity in Higher Education in Antigua and Barbuda

Elsie Hewlett-Thomas
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ACCESS AND EQUITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN ANTIGUA AND
BARBUDA

BY

ELSIE HEWLETT-THOMAS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy
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SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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Abstract

Across the international higher education spectrum access represents a significant issue. The literature is replete with analyses of access in various higher education systems. Low and inequitable patterns of participation in higher education are particularly prominent in developing countries. This dissertation is a case study of the higher education system of the state of Antigua and Barbuda, former British territories of the Caribbean region. Focusing on the issue of access and equity of access this study addresses the trends related to participation in higher education in this twin-island state of the Caribbean region, and analyzes factors that affect participation in this country. The study explores the role of government and institutional bodies in enhancing the rate and quality of participation in higher education in these territories, and seeks to determine factors affecting the state of preparedness of this country to participate and survive in the modern global social and economic order.

The study finds that increased and more equitable rates of participation in higher education would be achieved by strengthening and reorganizing aspects of the primary and secondary education levels. Creating an integrated and carefully articulated higher education system, which caters to a wide cross section of the inhabitants of the twin-island state, and which contains mechanisms for admissions for second chance candidates, would also serve to promote access to and equity in the higher education system of this country.

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To Antigua for the nurturing, and to the creation of a “just society”.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This study investigates the issue of participation in higher education in the twin-island nation state of Antigua and Barbuda in the English speaking Caribbean. The phenomenon of globalization created the imperative for governments and countries to ensure that all sectors of their societies had access to a high quality education. The convergence of three movements: the Information Revolution, the Revolution in International Trade and Investment, and the Phenomenon of the Knowledge Society, heralded the dawn of a new era. This new global environment was creating a borderless international society which had implications for the economic, social, and cultural welfare of all nations. In this new order all would be affected. The countries of the developing world, equal partners in this new order, were thrust into the arena of integration and interaction of governments, people, companies, international trade, and information technology.

Various reports commissioned by the regional governments determined that a disconnect existed between the education and labor sectors throughout the English-speaking Caribbean region. One such study (Winkler, in Brandon, 1995) indicated that the region was lagging in terms of participation in higher education essential to ensure its economic survival in the era of global economic and social arrangements. Rates of participation in higher education were estimated as ranging from 22% of the age range in Barbados to 7 % in Jamaica (EFA, 2000). For the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), documentary sources revealed that while almost every child had access to

primary education, only 50% accessed secondary schooling, and as low as 2% pursued studies at tertiary level institutions (Forde, 2005).

In the case of Antigua and Barbuda, the rate of participation at the tertiary level is significantly higher. Estimated at 16%, these rates were high by sub- regional standards (Roberts, 2006a). However, by international standards, the country still lagged behind the average participation rate. By comparison, rates of participation in higher education in the developed world approached the 50% mark. In the global era the imperative existed for all nations, especially poor ones, to equip their citizenry with the skills necessary for successful participation in the global economy, where knowledge and technological skills represented indispensable commodities. Without these skills, people and nations, especially small vulnerable nations, would be unable to survive economically.

Alongside participation rates, the equitable distribution of participation is also an essential component of a healthy higher education system. It is important that all citizens have access to an education that prepares them for the world of work (Blom & Hobbs, 2008). As the world became more technology driven and more deeply entrenched in the knowledge economy, the demand for skilled labor accelerated. Preparation for the world of work required more specialized knowledge and technological skills. The capacity of societies to participate successfully in a global economy was now based upon knowledge, and depended on the ability of nations to prepare a citizenry equipped with the requisite skills and information. In such a context, it was imperative that participation in higher education activities be available to all segments of communities. Tertiary education was now considered the tool best equipped to prepare a country for participation in the global economy, and create social equity.

Tertiary education supports the opportunity and empowerment dimensions outlined in the 2000 World Development Report. Access to tertiary education can bring better employment and income opportunities to underprivileged students, thereby decreasing inequity (World Bank Report, 2002 p.xx).

Further support for the importance of an equitable distribution of educational opportunities was provided by the World Bank in an article entitled "School and Work in the Eastern Caribbean." Exploring the level of adequacy of education in the OECS sub-region, the authors advised that an inequitable distribution of skills and educational opportunities in the OECS could result in the division of the OECS into an "unhealthy dual society of those with skills and opportunities and those without" (Blom & Hobbs, 2008, p.12).

Lack of access to tertiary education, moreover, represented an abrogation of human rights. Nations were duty bound to extend to each citizen the right to be educated, and to participate in education at all levels. Lack of access to participation denied people's human rights, and robbed society of a potential citizenry endowed with social and cultural capital. Harbison (1973) argued that the basis of the wealth of a nation is tied to the quality of its human resource base, its citizenry.

It was therefore imperative for Antigua and Barbuda, as a developing nation, to try to approach educational parity with more successful developing nations, as well as with the developed nations, in order to enhance opportunities for social and economic development at individual and societal levels, and to ensure survival in the International Global Order.

Background to the Problem

The background to the problem stemmed from a combination of phenomena: the modern phenomenon of globalization and its demands on the education sector to prepare an educated citizenry; the peculiar characteristics of the education sector in the English speaking Caribbean region, including its genesis, historical trajectory, and its development in conjunction with the socio-economic and political development of the region.

Globalization and the Developing World

Globalization can be traced as far back as the middle ages. Its manifestation in the late twentieth and early twenty first century was therefore not a new phenomenon. International trade was conducted for many centuries before the modern era of trade. The “Silk Road” facilitating trade between Asia and Europe has been well documented. The notorious Triangular trade, engaging in the barter and trade of human lives and other goods, spanning Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean, was itself a huge international trading arrangement. It is estimated that since 1950 the volume of trade has increased 20 times, and that flows of foreign investment nearly doubled between 1997 and 1999 from \$468 billion to \$827 billion (Friedman, n.d.).

The modern Global phenomenon led to the establishment of free markets. The benefits of this open market policy to the nations of the developed world have worked to the detriment of the developing nations. The removal of protective barriers which afforded them guaranteed markets for their products, and represented the main source of income for many of the developing countries, put these nations into a position of

competition with larger and more developed nations for the same markets. This resulted in trading and economic deficits for many of these nations, and led to an increase in unemployment and poverty rates in these nations (Byron, in Blom & Hobbes, 2008).

Advances in technology and its widespread use in all aspects of social, political and economic life, including commercial and international trading arrangements, placed the countries of the developing world at a further disadvantage. The exorbitant cost of technology in terms of training and equipment positioned the widespread use of these assets outside the reach of the developing nations, and presented a significant drawback to the ability of these countries to compete and survive in the international community of nations. The benefits of globalization would accrue only to those developing countries which were able to creatively minimize the losses and maximize the advantages of the new global arrangements as they presented themselves to these countries. This would require the training of the populations of these countries to be flexible, adaptable and responsive to change in order to take advantage of opportunities as they occurred, to equip them in the creative use and adaptation of new technologies in order to mitigate the losses, and increase the benefits that could accrue from globalization. It would also require that basic and advanced training be available to widespread sectors of these communities.

Policy makers in countries of the developing world consequently became understandably concerned about globalization and its effects. As economic growth slowed down towards the end of the first decade of the twenty first century in the Caribbean, it was recognized throughout the region that an educated population would be required to enable these countries, to survive and function effectively in the new order.

In the English-speaking Caribbean a problem existed in regard to participation in higher education. Reports recorded deficits in the sector suffered over the years. In the OECS sub-region, figures on tertiary education by country of origin and location of study for 1998, showed the total number of tertiary students per 10,000 of the population as dismally low. With an estimated population of approximately 66,843 people, Antigua showed a mere 58 persons in attendance at institutions of higher education. St. Kitts/Nevis fared a little better. With a population of 39,044 this country also had 58 persons attending institutions of higher education (Howe, 2005).

Another table showed the low representation of students from the OECS territories at the main campuses of the UWI between the years 1995-2001. During this period OECS representation ranged from 1.9% to 2.1 % (Cave Hill, Barbados); 1.9% – 0.8% (Mona, Jamaica); 0.9% -1.3% (St. Augustine, Trinidad). This demonstrated a pressing need for these countries to increase the participation rates in higher education of their citizens in order to meet the human resource demands of their economies, and to equip them, and the other OECS nations, to function effectively in the new global economy, and meet the demands of new technologies (Howe, 2005).

When viewed from the wider perspective of the entire region, encompassing all the territories of the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM), participation rates were still low. These figures varied from territory to territory. While some territories struggled to achieve universal primary education, others, such as Barbados, had rates of participation comparable to countries of the developed world (Winkler, in Brandon, 1995). Taken as a whole the English-speaking Caribbean region's rate of participation in higher education lagged behind the neighboring developing region of Latin America.

This latter region boasted an increase in enrollment between 1960 – 1980, which brought the enrollment levels in higher education in that region to 16% of 20-24 year olds in 1985, a figure approaching developed world averages (Winkler, in Brandon 1995).

Providing opportunities for access to higher education and ensuring its equitable provision is thus a challenge for developing nations (Roberts, 2006a). This reality is compounded by the fact that the world is now facing a new political, social and economic dispensation combining the challenges of globalization, the knowledge industry and technology. The onus is placed on governments and institutions of the region to prepare the human resource pool to meet the challenges that come in the wake of this new order.

The Genesis of Higher Education in the Caribbean

The challenges of participation in higher education were further compounded by the peculiar characteristics and evolution of higher education in the Anglophone Caribbean. Unlike its Latin American neighbors which had institutions of higher education from the seventeenth century, higher education did not exist in the English speaking Caribbean until the twentieth century. In the early history of the sector only a small number of candidates, generally from the upper social classes, were extended the opportunity to engage in post-secondary training. These studies were more often than not completed at institutions external to the Caribbean region. Families who could afford it frequently paid for their children's education abroad. Trow (1973) describes the elitist beginnings of the higher education systems of advanced nations, before the move to universal and mass education occurred. Much like the systems described by Trow, Caribbean higher education began as an elitist institution (Sherlock & Nettleford, 1990).

The Early Context of Caribbean Higher Education

From their settlement in the mid nineteenth century the Caribbean territories were incorporated in the slave trade and engaged in the production of primary products such as sugar and cotton for consumption by inhabitants of the metropolitan countries. The post-emancipation system of education offered very little in the way of educational opportunities to the Africans and the descendants of Africans who had been transshipped to the region to serve as free labor. Education, and particularly higher education came to be considered the privilege of the upper, mostly White, classes. The system of education was based upon the British system of education. The materials used, and the contexts of instruction were British (Thomas, 1979). This system of education offered little in the way of vocational or tertiary training. Very few of the inhabitants of these territories received secondary training, and instruction was primarily focused on reading, writing and arithmetic skills. British poetry and literature were heavily emphasized (Thomas, 1979). As part of the British colonial system, the purpose of education was to equip participants to enable them to fill lower administrative and clerical positions in the colonial government. In the colonial era, technical and professional positions were generally filled by expatriate personnel.

A situation of educational irrelevance thus developed in the region and persisted into the early post-independence period. To a large extent, the education system of the emancipation, post-colonial and early independence periods in this region failed to meet the needs of individuals and the Caribbean societies, in terms of providing knowledge of the environment, and training individuals in skills and attitudes necessary to enable effective contribution to the socio-economic development of these communities.

Later, political independence from Britain, the movement towards nationalism, the improvement in economic conditions throughout the region, and the attempt to keep pace with trends in the developed countries, led governments throughout the region to make some efforts to increase participation rates. The attainment of independence roughly correlated with the exodus of the European managerial class, who had traditionally owned the main industries on which the islands functioned, and manned the governmental institutions. As expatriate manpower departed, more students were sent to the regional university to enable these island nations to meet the human resource demands of these developing economies. Compounding this need for manpower was the establishment of various industries, which required top and middle management expertise.

Howe (2005) records that by the early 1980s many Caribbean territories sought and obtained their independence from Britain. This marked a major period in the development of higher education in the region as one by one each of these territories became independent states. Britain, having wrung all the substance from the islands, was happy to be rid of the responsibility of them, economically and militarily, and offered them their freedom on a silver platter. These islands one by one assumed statehood, and thus became some of the smallest independent nations in the world.

As newly independent nations, these territories relied heavily on their colonial past in the running of their affairs. The systems which existed in the immediate post-independence period largely reflected the colonial framework with which they were familiar. Soon these territories began the task of restructuring their education systems, adapting existing policies and procedures, and adopting novel strategies more suited to

the physical and social make up of the region. The process was neither immediate nor unproblematic, and the scope and content of education largely reflected the socio-political and economic trajectory of the region.

The educational system of the Anglophone Caribbean thus had its origins in the context of European expansionism. This system evolved from a colonial relationship which was characterized by the subjugation of the dominant population to the colonial policies of Britain. These Caribbean countries, exposed to systemic exploitation and policies of assimilation, developed social systems which contained aspects of the former dominating culture accompanied by features native to the populations, or which evolved spontaneously within the system. In some cases this “hybrid” tendency evolved after the system had been in existence for some time, and developed its own characteristics naturally, by design, or cybernetically, as in the case of the United States, by trial and error, determining its own survival (Mintzberg, 2005).

The British colonial legacy of a regional educational system at primary and secondary levels culminated in the establishment of the regional institution of higher education, the University of the West Indies. This institution became a unifying force, assisting in the evolution of a regional personality in the Anglophone Caribbean territories. The education system thus served as the vehicle for the transmission of ideas, and the institution or perpetuation of ideologies, including social, economic, and political philosophies, and education came to play a dual and reinforcing role. It was informed by its environment, and in turn informed its environment. The socio-economic trajectory of the region was therefore partially a product of the educational trend of the region, even while acting to produce those trends. Consequently the socio-economic and education

sectors developed hand in hand, mutually reinforcing and sustaining each other. Changes occurring in one sector tended to affect the other, and were related systemically to changes in the other.

From its inception the system of education in the Caribbean was skewed in favor of the economically advantaged. In Colonial Caribbean society the socio-economic system of slavery almost entirely excluded the Black population from access to education. The education received by the enslaved population was largely informal. When slavery was legally abolished, only 5% of this population possessed skills of basic literacy. By contrast approximately 60% of the White population was literate (Howe, 2005). Access to higher education was reserved for the male children of wealthy White landowners, who attended prestigious institutions such as Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard.

During the colonial period the educational sector functioned mainly to prepare citizens to serve as teachers and civil servants in the colonial government. Access to education in this era was based on selective allocation, and, even after emancipation only a minority of blacks received a formal education (Gordon, 1998). The Sterling Report of 1835, the first educational plan prepared for the region, recommended the expansion of education capacity, and stressed the importance of infant education. This plan recommended the establishment of a higher education sector to prepare teachers and other leaders for the task of community building (Howe, 2005). Like the inherited economic system, the education system often propagated a culture and values that were alien to the people of the colonized societies, and proved unsuitable for addressing the challenges faced by Caribbean people after emancipation (Gordon, 1998).

The Negro Education Grant marked the beginning of mass education in the British colonies. This subsidy of 30,000 pounds annually was used by the British government and the various missionary societies to build schools and pay teachers' salaries. In this post-emancipation period, between 1834 and 1960, access to education was made available to poor whites, Indians, people categorized as coloreds, and Africans who had been formerly enslaved (Howe, 2005). During this period a number of reports were commissioned. Among the recommendations made were: the access of females to education; the enhanced development of tertiary education; the institution of island scholarships to expand access and to foster a more educational climate. In 1938 a regional planning commission was established on the recommendation of the Moyne Commission, which had a mandate to seek solutions to ameliorate economic and social conditions in the region (Howe, 2005).

The post-colonial period in the Anglophone Caribbean lasted until the 1960s when the various territories began to gain their independence from Great Britain. During this period the relationship between Britain and the erstwhile colonies continued to be one of the domination of the former over the latter. Britain continued to control these territories through its control trade and marketing arrangements for the former colonies.

Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana, described neocolonialist policy the worst form of imperialism. He argues that for the practitioners neocolonialist policy represents power without responsibility. For those on receiving end, it amounts to a system of exploitation. In the colonial period, the imperial power was obligated to justify and explain its actions, and colonial people could seek redress, and claim protection from their opponents. In the neocolonial era this was not the case, and issues such as living

conditions, education and poverty were left unresolved by neocolonialist policy (Nkrumah, 1965).

This period of Caribbean economic and social development was characterized by the continuation of exports of primary products, often with the institution of special trading arrangements with the old trading partners, which guaranteed a market for the products of these erstwhile colonies. The production of light manufactured goods, usually assembly line products, of which the individual components originated in the developed world. The production process capitalized on the cheap labor available in the developing territory. These goods often qualified for duty free treatment under the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) trading arrangements, and for preferential treatment in exports throughout the region. Foreign investment became a major source of financial growth.

In spite of and alongside the neocolonial policies, some positive economic trends were occurring. A movement in the direction of self-actualization was taking place. Howe (2005) records that two experiences in the period following the Second World War caused the education sector to undergo changes: the export of agricultural products and the mining of raw materials in the region such as bauxite in Jamaica and oil in Trinidad and Tobago. These events created a growth period in the regional economy. The development of an import-substitution sector also supported the financial growth spurt of the region. As the islands became more prosperous governments became major employers and began to invest heavily in housing, education and other social services (Howe, 2005).

At the academic level a growth in national sentiment led to calls for the territories of the region to seek independence from Britain. This led to efforts to

“westindianize” the curriculum. National governments sought to “expand and enhance” the capacity of the higher education structure throughout the region (Howe, 2005).

Efforts were made to expand access to larger segments of the populations of the region, and to reduce the dependence on external examinations and replace them with assessment instruments created regionally.

Towards the end of the 1970s and into the early 1980s the Caribbean region went through a period of economic hardship. Some economists had warned of the dangers of embarking on economic strategies and behaviors which created an overwhelming dependence on external bodies. The period of relative affluence had spurred an environment of economic consumerism. The export of primary products with some import substitution relying heavily on external inputs were strategies which led the region into a situation of external indebtedness and a reliance on foreign investment. This led to a period of “structural adjustment” in certain territories, as stringent economic measures were imposed by institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Affected by these measures the education sub-sector suffered declines in expenditure and corresponding drops in performance levels. Free text book and student welfare programs were affected. These cutbacks in expenditure on education dealt a blow to higher education, perceived as having a lower rate of return in investment than the secondary and primary sections (Howe, 2005). Government scholarships and awards of financial assistance previously available to students for the pursuit of higher education suffered cutbacks, even in those territories where previously higher education was funded predominantly by the government.

Purpose of the Study

In the context of the low participation rates that plague the English-speaking Caribbean region, this study addressed access and equity of access to higher education in Antigua and Barbuda, and the factors that act to prohibit this access. Correlating information and statistics related to the wider economic, social, and political situations of this twin island nation have been collected and used to determine patterns of participation in higher education.

The main research questions guiding this study are firstly, what factors affect access and equity of access to higher education in Antigua and Barbuda? And secondly, what are tertiary institutions and the national government doing to promote access and to ensure equity of access to higher education in the state?

It is hoped that this study will contribute to knowledge and understanding of the socio-organizational phenomenon of access to higher education in this country, and the question of equity as it affects participation in higher education, and possibly by extension, shed some light on the situation of the Anglophone Caribbean in general, and the OECS countries in particular.

Overview of the Study Methods

The research is based on a variety of data collection instruments. In depth interviews were conducted in two rounds with education leaders and other stakeholders in and external to the education system. At the level of the national government, members of the Ministry of Education were interviewed. Other interview participants included: administrators of the various higher education institutions; teachers in the public

education system, individuals that had attended the local and regional branches of the higher education spectrum, and others who had not. Some students currently participating in the higher education process were also interviewed.

The first round sought answers to the research question “What is the state of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?” while the second round sought answers to the second question “What has been done at official levels to promote access and equity in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?”

The first round focused on interviewing a wide spectrum of individuals, to get an overall perspective of education and the issue of who had access. This grouping included teachers in and outside of the public education system; administrators, government officials; students who had participated at different levels of the local/regional system, and individuals who had received training outside of this system. The second round of interviews was conducted with more purposefully selected individuals. This round focused on government officials responsible for education, past and current; administrative personnel from the higher education sector. Individuals in this round were experts in the sector, and as such, discussions with them were considered key informant interviews.

Primary and secondary sources of print data were consulted to gain an understanding of the socio-economic environment in which the education sector of the country operates, as well as to gain insight of the performance of the education sector based on the data of reputable international organizations such as UNESCO and the World Bank. Some additional primary sources of data include the Board of Education records of High Stakes tests taken by students at various levels of the schooling process:

the Common Entrance Examination, the Post-Primary Exam; and the CXC Exams; the Board of Education records of scholarships awarded to students.

Information was also gleaned from studies conducted locally and regionally, and by international organizations focusing on the Caribbean area. Many of these served as secondary sources of information, but helped significantly to establish the comparative context of the study. Some of these include studies on higher education of the various countries in the region individually and generally.

An analysis of documents and materials relevant to the sector and the wider social and economic environment in which the education sector operates, as well as legislation related to the enhancement of the higher education sector, were searched out. Print records of government speeches were searched out to seek to establish the intent of the national government in relation to the development of the sector.

Direct observation and participation can be considered to constitute aspects of the data collection method used in this study, since the researcher was schooled in the system being studied, from primary through tertiary levels, and later worked as a teacher in the same system for a number of years. As such was able to experience the system at all levels.

Significance of the study

This study of access and equity in Antigua and Barbuda is intended as an investigation into the situation of participation in higher education in the twin island state, and to determine to what extent tertiary education is accessible by all segments of the population. Previous studies of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda have concerned

themselves primarily with the development and evolution of various segments of the system; descriptions and analyses of the system, and components of the system nationally and regionally; the impact of the education system on the development thrust of the individual states, and in some cases the region. In some of these works the issue of access and equity of access are treated in a cursory manner (Bird, 1980, 1989; Francis, 1975; O'Mard, 1967; Osoba, 1967, 1998; Mellanson, 2000).

The present dissertation adopted the perspective of focusing on the issue of access and the equitability of that access from the point of view that, unless access is equitably provided, unless physical, organizational and legislative infrastructure exists to allow all sections of society to participate equally in higher education, then it will be impossible to achieve universal higher education. This study explores the frameworks and environment in which the Antigua and Barbuda system of higher education functions, and the factors which promote or prohibit the successful development of the system.

It is hoped that this study will add to the discourse on higher education in Antigua and Barbuda by investigating the situation of access to and equity of access to higher education. Hopefully the insight gained on the existing situation will help in constructing a more effective higher education system, at the national level, and provide some solutions that will allow the twin island state to demonstrate best practices in the delivery of higher education services.

Antigua/Barbuda was chosen for this study for a number of reasons. First is its centrality, logistically, economically, and structurally as well. Antigua and Barbuda like Trinidad and Tobago and St. Kitts and Nevis has the constitutional status of one

statehood supporting two island-communities. Many aspects of access and equity affected by this “duality,” addressed by the study of Antigua/Barbuda will be pertinent to those territories. Secondly, Antigua has long been the unofficial central point of the Leeward Islands, the Less Developed Countries (LDCs) of the region. This distinction places it economically centrally between the More Developed Countries (MDCs) or larger territories, and the smaller ones. This was even more pronounced in an era when the stipulations of the International Monetary Fund have weakened many of the MDCs. Economically Antigua/Barbuda therefore represents a center point. Thirdly, in terms of industry and trade, the same holds. Industrially, Antigua/Barbuda combines agriculture, light industry and tourism with some fishing, has the second lowest rate of unemployment and the highest GDP of the OECS sub region (Roberts, 2006a).

These factors allow a study of Antigua to be relevant for arriving at conclusions about the situation of higher education that may bear some relevance to other territories in other parts of the English-speaking Caribbean. Although each island is unique in certain respects, because of the many common features which they share historically, socially, politically, economically, culturally and environmentally, these factors may allow this case to serve as a point of departure for reviewing some aspects of the educational structure of the English-speaking Caribbean, especially those in the OECS sub-region.

Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation comprises six chapters. Chapter I introduces the study, describes the nature of the problem, and outlines the wider socio-economic, historical and

educational parameters of the issue. It identifies the purpose, significance, and limitations of the study as well as the organization of the dissertation.

Chapter II sets the parameters for the discussion on equity and access in Antigua and Barbuda. It provides further rationale for the study by reviewing some literature related to some of the main issues. The section explores four issues: (a) the impact of globalization on the Human Resource needs of the Caribbean; (b) the purpose of institutions of higher education in the developing world; (c) the importance of access and equity in higher education; and (d) theories of Human Resource development.

Chapter III describes the research design, provides demographic information on the country, describes and discusses the research questions and data sources, describes the referenced variables, and discusses the research methods and interview protocols used in each of two rounds of interviews. It describes the two rounds of interviews and conducts an analysis of the data revealed.

Chapter IV provides a background to higher education in Antigua and Barbuda. This takes the form of analysis of the socio-economic context of higher education in the country, a review of the historical and current situations of the sector, and a description of the financing of higher education.

Chapter V describes the findings of the study by discussing the main themes that emerged, and answering the subsidiary and main research questions of the study.

Chapter VI comprises a discussion of the findings of the study, and recommendations. This chapter also includes a section summarizing the major conclusions of the study and ends with some suggestions for future research..

Definition of Terms

Access to tertiary education has been defined as “the ability people from all backgrounds to access higher education on a reasonably equal basis” (Global Higher Education Rankings, 2005, p.2). This definition is comprehensive in scope. It takes into account the issue of participation and equitability. It infers that in the absence of the ability of people of all backgrounds to “reasonably” be able to take advantage of educational opportunity, that an educational system cannot be considered “accessible.” In the countries of the developed world including those of the Caribbean region, opportunities for participating in higher education have been limited. Consequently the development of such opportunity is of great significance to these countries. In fact, it may be argued, that because of the level of development or underdevelopment of the higher education systems of these countries, the creation of opportunity is of as great importance as the issue of equitable access. For this reason only, and bearing in mind that access is truly not achieved unless it is equitable in nature, in this study the terms *access* and *equity* are being used to differentiate between increased opportunities and numbers of participants in the sector (access), and the extent to which all sections of society are included in higher education pursuits (equity). In the study, however, the concept of equitable access will be the one most frequently invoked.

The term *higher education* was usually synonymous with education which leads to the acquisition of degrees, that is, university education. Later the term came to incorporate other “alternative” types of education, “including practically oriented, cheaper and more socially open tertiary institutions” (Roberts, 2003, p.17). This paper will use the definition of higher education described and espoused by Vivienne Roberts

which accepts “higher education” as “a more general term which has come to include not only university education but the type or stage of education which also takes place in other similar institutions” (Roberts, 2003, p.17).

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited by a number of factors. First, the paucity of current, complete, and continuous data and statistics related to higher education in Antigua and Barbuda. In a number of cases, figures were not available from World Bank and UNESCO documents. This could probably be due to the limited staffing in the various departments, and/ or the lack of political will. It was suggested that the absence of statistical records could be due to the reluctance of staff to engage in the tedious task of gathering and recording information perceived as being hardly, if ever, used. As such this task was regarded as a tedious and fruitless activity. The paucity of up to date information made it necessary at times to extrapolate data from OECS, CARICOM, and other developing country statistics, or to make comparisons with those countries.

Another limitation related to the decentralization of the information relating to higher education in the country. Because higher education is not yet regarded as a sector in its own right, while in general the functioning of the institutions of higher education in the country falls under the jurisdiction of the Education Department, a number of related aspects are carried out by other departments and Ministries of Government, with no substantiating records of these activities being kept in the department of education. Another confusing factor for this author was the fact that the Ministry of Education in

this country is separate from the Board of Education. At times it was difficult distinguishing the functions of each as these applied to higher education.

Another perceived limitation regarded the fact that the qualitative component of the mixed method research design determined that aspects of the study were based on perceptions of participants and not totally on quantitative data, regarded by some as more scientific and therefore more reflective of the true situation. On the positive side, however, this design, rather than diminish the integrity of the study, allowed corroboration by multiple sources and multiple perspectives.

A final limiting factor concerns the fact that interviews were restricted to a selected number of participants, and that these view points were used to represent the spectrum of the discourse on higher education in the country. However, since the persons interviewed were selected because of their knowledge of education in the country, or their position in relation to higher education, it was determined that they were adequately qualified in their knowledge and experience to represent the areas selected, and could therefore be considered as reliable sources of information.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviews literature which addresses concepts relative to the situation of access to and equity in higher education. The literature also addresses the roles of government and higher education institutions in this process. In this connection four topics were reviewed.

The first section, entitled Globalization and the English-Speaking Caribbean, considers the impact of globalization on the Anglophone territories of the region, and on the human resource thrust in the English-speaking Caribbean region. This section explains the increased enhancement imperative for enhanced participation in higher education.

The second section entitled The Role of Higher Education in Development, reviews some perspectives on the responsibilities of institutions of higher education in the developing world. This section focuses on the role of these institutions in the social and economic development of developing countries.

The third section examines some select perspectives on access and equity in higher education, and highlights the importance of equitable access.

The fourth section reviews some of the socio-educational theories that have been used to analyze the developing nations of the world, including Antigua and Barbuda, in the context of their relevance to human resource development through higher education. This section explores the proposition that the theories commonly used to describe phenomena frequently become the commonly adopted perspective, and assume a position

of preeminence in determining the policy thrusts adopted to resolve inconsistencies in these systems. An example of this is dependency theory, which came to be a commonly accepted economic perspective for many developing nations, particularly in the Latin American and Caribbean regions. This perspective came to determine the governmental policy of many of these nations, and economic policy towards the First World nations came to be based on concepts of dependency of the less affluent on the more affluent nations. This concept was later tagged the Dependency Syndrome.

Globalization and the English-Speaking Caribbean

Traditionally, in compliance with the liberal economic theory of comparative advantage, the economies of the English speaking Caribbean territories were dependant on exporting agricultural products, and on mining a limited number of mineral products for export. Financial services and tourism also constituted main activities of these economies. The susceptibility of the tourist industry to natural disasters and declining economic conditions in the developed nations, the loss of preferential status for their agricultural products, and the problems faced by the financial services sector, were a mounting cause of concern in the Caribbean region.

One of the main economic and social problems faced by the territories of the Caribbean was their small size. This factor prevented these countries from minimizing costs and maximizing benefits through economies of scale in social and economic situations. Small size created problems related to economies of scale, limited capacity, technologically as well as financially, and limited natural resources. Byron notes that “developing countries” this would include those that are small states “have inadequate

resources to devote to devising appropriate strategies for participating effectively in the new global order (Byron, in Benn & Hall, 2000, p.136).

In a report commissioned by the World Bank, Blom & Hobbs (2008) reported that transformation in the economic sector of the OECS countries led to the growth of a service sector which accounted for almost four-fifths of the economy. For this sector skilled labor was required. In the traditional industries changes also occurred which required workers highly skilled and knowledgeable in their fields. Fewer and fewer jobs required low skilled and manual workers. Thus a disconnect existed between the education system and the labor market in the OECS (Blom & Hobbs, 2008). The study reported that there was a dire shortage of professional and highly skilled workers in the OECS sub region to which Antigua and Barbuda belonged. Three reasons were posited: low rates of enrollment in post-secondary education; a high migration of skilled workers; the need to link the programs of post secondary studies in these territories to market needs. These were the trends set by the new global economic order.

Byron (as cited in Benn & Hall, 2000) listed some of the effects of globalization on the OECS territories. These included a reduction in the level of protection accorded these territories in their international and regional trade relations, a deepening reliance on service areas such as tourism and the financial sector, the rise of globalized crime such as narcotrafficking, and the rising incidence of environmental disasters. Byron recounted that in the first decade of independence of the OECS countries, 1980-1990, these territories recorded growth rates which ranged from 4.3 per cent per annum to 6.7 per cent per annum, and that during the 1980s the OECS sub region had an average growth rate of 5.7 per cent per annum. However, between 1990-1996 the OECS regional growth

rate was reduced to 2.7 per cent per annum (Byron as cited in Benn & Hall, 2000).

Globalization thus had deleterious effects on the economic situation of the OECS territories.

The effects of the global revolution have forced countries across the world, particularly the developing world, to adopt measures to ensure their survival in this new order. One of the main counters to the effects of global policy and its impact on these small states is to be prepared to compete in the new order, by producing a cadre of skilled workers who are able to creatively take advantage of the opportunities provided by a global economy and market.

The impact of new global policies on the social and economic life of countries, especially developing countries, necessitates the intervention by national governments to ensure smooth transitions, including preparing populations to face the challenges that accompany this phenomenon.

In response to these challenges of globalization, the demand for higher education increased; the use and quality of technology also increased; and knowledge and research became global commodities, resulting in the establishment of global research networks. As a result there was an increase in governmental demands for higher standards and greater accountability on the part of institutions of higher education; the academic profession transformed as institutions of higher education faced financial challenges. This led to the globalization of the academic profession. Academics also became mobile, as institutions sought to recruit talent wherever it existed; student engagement was also affected by these changes (Altbach, 2001).

In the developing world, one of the main tasks of institutions of higher education was to monitor the impact of globalization on the social and economic structures of the various societies. This would involve improving the quality of the workforce in terms of basic education, as new jobs would require higher levels of education, and the upgrading of the technological skills of citizens to function proficiently in a highly technological world. In this regard Byron (as cited in Benn & Hall, 2000) noted that the OECS countries had “demonstrated the capacity to exploit, at least temporarily, some niches in globalized service markets and [generated] a degree of prosperity for their small populations” (Byron, in Benn & Hall, 2000, p.138).

For the survival of the economies of the countries of the English-Speaking Caribbean, institutions of higher education, including the University of the West Indies, as well as other national higher education institutions in the region, would have to keep pace with the rest of the international system. The onus was on these institutions, as well as on national governments, to create an environment which supported the development of skills and the expansion of knowledge.

The Role of Higher Education in Development

“Education may well be the single most important factor in the development process. In an economic sense, an investment in education must be regarded as an investment in the most important of all resources, the human resource” (Hewlett-Thomas, 1992). Important to the role of higher education is the question of purpose. The role of higher education in development is related to an institution’s perspective of its purpose, often expressed in its mission statement. What is the university trying to achieve? A

determination of an institution of higher education's role is related to the goals traditionally espoused by the institution. Stanley Fish (2003, as cited in Bok, 2006) stated, that the purpose of the university was related to mastering intellectual and scholarly skills. Other theorists have cited the importance of the ability to communicate, the development of critical thinking skills, the aptitude for moral reasoning, preparing citizens capable of making informed choices, and able to cope with diversity in a more global society (Bok, 2006). It is widely accepted that these goals are all-important goals of a university education.

A goal often debated in First World literature is the preparation of students for a career. In this connection Aristotle (as cited in Bok, 2006) questioned whether the useful in life, or should virtue, or higher knowledge be the focus of education (Bok, 2006). In the case of the evolution of the American university the concepts of utilitarianism became important to the development of the economy. This country, focused on the ideals of utility, soon developed the strongest economy in the world based on its industrial strength.

In like manner, the countries of the developing world, while cognizant of the importance of the aesthetic qualities of education, focused on the labor implications of educational policy for the optimum use of scarce resources. Human resource development had to keep pace with the needs of the environment for filling staffing vacancies with trained personnel. The focus of the university in these areas of the world therefore included national development. Altbach (1998) made telling point regarding the importance of the university to developing nations. He expounded:

Third World universities are among the few fully modern institutions in their

societies. They produce the highly trained elites necessary for the operation of the modern state, are very often at the political vortex of their societies, produce cultural commentary and criticism, and, in some nations, make important contributions to defining newly established political entities (p.22).

Institutions of higher education in the Caribbean, including The University of the West Indies, have an important role to play in national development. Altbach (1998) described the “moral authority” of the academic community as “a force in societies without a large number of politically articulate individuals” (p.22). The university in the Caribbean then is a watchdog. As the center of knowledge and academic reflection, it is the responsibility of these centers of learning to monitor, research, advise, and assist national governments in the region, to negotiate responses to economic arrangements, and issues of trade, and to help prepare the population to participate successfully in the knowledge society of the twenty-first century.

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first century human capital replaced physical and financial capital as the chief resource of societies. Nancy Birdsall (as cited in Howe, 2005) described the phenomenon this way:

Education, the most easily measured form of human capital, is, like land and other forms of wealth, an asset. In today’s global markets, it is a scarce asset, and can therefore generate income for its owners. It is a special asset in two respects. First, once acquired, it cannot be stolen or sold – it cannot be alienated from its owners. Second, as the amount of education increases, other assets such as land and physical capital decline as a proportion of total wealth in an economy; since the ownership of these latter assets is more usually concentrated than that of education, the overall

concentration of all assets declines. Thus an increase in education is likely to have an equalizing effect as long as it is broadly distributed (p.21).

Education now came to be commonly considered a vital resource in human development in a variety of quality of life indicators, which were not directly related to the accumulation of financial assets, the underutilization of which was considered to be one of the most critical problems faced by developing countries (Harbison, 1993). Higher education was now recognized for its critical role in developing human capital resources. A World Bank task force (2000, as cited in Howe, 2005) identified educated people as “social entrepreneurs”, the Task Force argued that [an educated populace] would support strong institutions and infrastructure, encourage good governance, and create a climate which would be favorable to good business. The relative economic successes of the Asian countries and of Barbados in the English-Speaking Caribbean have been credited to the presence of such a well-educated citizenry (Howe, 2005).

In describing the importance of higher education to national development, the World Bank (as cited in Howe, 2005) described the role of these institutions as:

- supporting knowledge-driven growth strategies; constructing democratic, socially cohesive societies; training professionals for macroeconomic and public sector management; academic and research activities; supporting the countries’ information structure by acting as repositories and conduits of information;
- imparting norms, values and ethics that constitute the foundation of social capital necessary for constructing healthy civil societies (p.26).

Delores Jacques, in a report to UNESCO (1996), (as cited in Howe, 2005), described the important role played by institutions of higher education in developing

countries, including providing the basis for development programs, the training of human resources and formulating policy.

The vital importance of the University of the West Indies to the development of the English-speaking Caribbean was described in a report of the Chancellor's Commission on the Governance of the University of the West Indies (as cited in Howe, 2005).

To the peoples of the countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean, the University of the West Indies is as much a symbol as it is an institution. It is regarded not simply as a repository of knowledge but as a beacon for future accomplishments

Should the university not fulfill the high expectations of its constituents, the well-being of the peoples resident here and the quality of their societies will unquestionably deteriorate" (Report of Chancellor's Commission, 1994 in Howe, 2005, p. 27-28).

In the new order higher education came to be regarded as a vital element in the development of nations, especially developing nations. It was vital therefore, for the poorer nations of the world that the skills and knowledge base of its citizenry be expanded to ensure the economic survival of these vulnerable nations. In developing countries institutions of higher education had almost a moral obligation to oversee the development of these nations, in their contexts of scarce resources.

The Importance of Equity in Higher Education

"...freedom is not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying:

Now you are free to go where you want, and do as you desire... You do not take a

person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, "you are free to compete with all the others," and still justly believe that you have been completely fair. Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates. This is the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equality but human ability. Not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and equality as a result (Johnson, 1965, paras.11-13).

This observation and the advice contained in this statement was given by President Lyndon Johnson in his commencement address at Howard University in June of 1965. The oration entitled "To Fulfill These Rights," was a fitting approach to the issue of equity in higher education.

In any consideration of access and equity, the main question to be determined concerns how access to higher education is organized in a society and who has access to it. (Huang, 2005). Some intellectuals adopted the position that education functioned primarily to reinforce the status quo (Althusser, 1972). Some analysts of this persuasion argued that education served to reinforce the status quo, and that simply expanding access did little to redress the imbalance that existed between the privileged and the underprivileged (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). This view supported the position that efforts to base access on grounds of merit defeated the principle of equitable access. Merit, was often upheld as a fair way of identifying talented students. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) refuted this theory, pointing out that this method was hardly equitable since many factors impacted an individual's decision to pursue higher education. These

analysts correctly argued that in addition to other prohibiting factors, poor candidates entered into exams with less confidence than their wealthy classmates who had been prepared at better schools, grown up in better homes and had lived in better communities. Despite efforts to redress the imbalance through merit, the privileged were still preponderantly more represented in higher education than the less privileged (UNESCO, 1983, as cited in Huang, 2005).

The ideal of equity in higher education was supported by the need of nations to survive in a globalized economy. This meant a substantial increase in rates of participation in higher education for many nations (Bensimon, Hao & Bustillos, 2003). Groups historically marginalized from the process would have to participate in higher education, and work to attain more knowledge and increased skills.

Post-Independent Caribbean nations, concerned with providing access to the less privileged throughout the region, worked towards achieving universal primary education. In many countries in this region equity in accessing primary education was achieved. Some of these territories were close to achieving universal secondary education. Access and equity in higher education would be one step away.

Clancy and Goastellec (2007) observed that in admission to institutions of higher education, there was a move throughout the world away from inherited merit, and a counter move towards the adoption of equitable methods, including various forms of affirmative action for underrepresented groups. These theorists contended that the norm of equality of rights reflected the concern that higher education should be available to wider segments of the population, regardless of social origin. Socio-economic

background and ascriptive status should not constitute grounds for preferential treatment in the participation process.

In developing countries, like Antigua and Barbuda, the issues of access and equity encompassed the difficult task of increasing participation while simultaneously expanding access to groups and segments of the population previously excluded from participation in higher education. The question of equity pitted merit against measures to attain a more equal representation of students. This was a controversial area since, as Clancy and Goastellec (2007) contended, in many cases, students who excelled academically had opportunities denied many of those excluded from the process. The question of lowering regional standards was a major concern. Caribbean academics feared that removing merit as the chief admission criteria would result in lowering regional standards (Sherlock & Nettleford, 1990). Those of this persuasion subscribed to a definition of merit which reflected academic levels of students in relation to the circumstances which they faced in achieving academically. These could include such factors as community, family and schooling experiences as well as personal characteristics that created conditions which handicapped their academic progress (Clancy & Goastellec, 2007).

Theories of Human Resource Development

Theories help to create a framework for understanding social phenomena. Theories not only explain, but allow observers to predict future occurrences. Relevant concepts serve to enhance analysis. An analysis of institutions or systems of higher education is enhanced when viewed within conceptual structures that frame their

operations. In this way, perspectives adopted consciously or subconsciously or unconsciously by institutions or systems, can be addressed.

The theories which are used to explain a social, political, economic, or education system can eventually become defining the characteristics of those systems. Some theories may partially explain the characteristics of a system. Some may explain the evolution and development of systems or institutions, but lack the capacity to predict or prescribe the future operations of the system.

In the present context a review of some of the theories used to explain the situation of the higher education system in the Caribbean region in general, and that of Antigua and Barbuda in particular might help in part to explain some of the characteristics of the system, and to some extent the malaise which is evidenced in various sectors, such as the education sector.

There are a number of theories which frame the discourse on human resource development. Some concepts have been borrowed from the social sciences, in particular Political Science, and transferred to the field of international/comparative education. This section will focus on various theories which generally apply, and some which are relevant to human resource development in nations such as Antigua and Barbuda.

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital theory (HCT) supports the investment in human capital, and considers human capital an important physical commodity. In the context of the social and economic development of nations, education was seen as enhancing labor productivity, thereby improving one's income. In the early 1960s Theodore Schultz,

Jacob Mincer and Gary Becker (as cited in Zhang, 2001) began studying the role of human capital in productivity. In more recent times human capital theory was used to explain economic growth among nations and income distribution among individuals (Zhang, 2003). Human Capital Theory presumed that the labor market, through increased remunerations, rewarded those who took the initiative to invest in themselves. The move to expand access to higher education thus reflected a main precept of this theory. One of the arguments used to support the move to educate larger segments of the populations of countries, particularly the non-traditional segments, is related to this theory. HCT is evident in the concept of educating the labor force to obtain financial rewards. According to this theory, the process of education and classroom learning lead to economic productivity. Schools are thus held responsible for the economic development of society. This theory failed to take into account the concept, later advocated in Social Reproduction Theory, that the ability to “invest in oneself” thereby receiving increased remunerations, was not “happenstance,” but was in part due to the functioning of a systemic process.

Social Reproduction Theory

Social Reproduction Theory evolved as a counter to the assumptions of Human Capital Theory, positing that the distribution of credentials among individuals was relative to forces of social stratification, and was therefore determined to a large extent by issues of race, gender and class (Zhang, 2003).

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron were early theorists of the Social Reproduction persuasion. These theorists drew on Marxist theory to explain their

observations of the process of education in their environments. They argued that education worked to maintain the status quo, and that through the educational process the dominant classes maintained their positions, while the underprivileged remained poor through the process of intergenerational transmission of social inequality. Following this lead other theorists tried to show how in the United States as in Europe, the poor remained poor while the rich achieved elevated states of wealth (Zhang, 2003).

Transferred to the Caribbean setting this theory was relevant in helping to explain much of the conditions of social deprivation that plagued certain communities, and seemed to reproduce like conditions over time. Poverty in a number of countries in this region appeared constant in certain communities.

Center-Periphery Theory

This theory explains the reproducing effect in larger, more international terms. In the field of political science this theory holds that the central capitalist economies control the means of production internationally, and that the territories of the center marginally eke out an existence by maintaining an economic relationship with the center, which places them in the role of provider of the center's raw materials, for which they are minimally compensated, and consumer of the center's costly final products. According to this theory the economic well-being of the periphery is tied to that of the center. Whenever the center experiences negative economic trends the peripheral territories reflect negative, more exaggerated symptoms.

Borrowed from the field of political science, center-periphery theory was deemed to have application in the field of education. In this context the theory was considered to

bear relevance for both the national and international roles of universities. In this approach the international system of education was perceived as having intellectual centers from which ideas, research and models emanated. They were research- oriented, prestigious and part of an international knowledge system. They possessed large libraries and well-equipped laboratories. They had access to research funds and produced a high proportion of doctoral degrees (Altbach, 1998).

The theory held that on the other end of the continuum were the peripheral institutions which copied developments that occurred in the center, and were considered to produce little that was original (Altbach, 1998). These institutions were seen as following the lead of the institutions at the center, and tended generally to not be at the “frontiers of knowledge”. Altbach (1998) describes the facilities of these institutions as less than adequate, the professors more poorly compensated and less world-renowned. These institutions were seen as having less well-trained staff, and were considered as not having reached the “take-off” point for academic excellence (p.20). Altbach argues that the “apparatus of knowledge access and distribution was concentrated at the Center, and was communicated through such world languages as English and French” (p.20). This theory held that the disseminating apparatus, also at the Center, ensured control of the creation and dissemination of knowledge, and ultimately the domination of the sector. This situation came to be challenged by a number of developing countries.

The Center-Periphery concept stemmed from the Dependency Theory. This theory held that developing nations were forced by the capitalist system into a situation of dependency. Dependency theory saw the First World countries as exploiters of the Third World. This theory arose as a counter to mainstream theories such as modernization

theory, which assumed that with wise stewardship, less developed countries would attain the position of developing countries. Dependency theory developed out of Marxist thought, which placed the plight of underdevelopment squarely at the feet of capitalist economic policies, actively encouraging the poorer countries to pursue an economic path of leading to underdevelopment (Hubbell, 2008).

Based on this concept, center-periphery theory held that these territories were dependent and helpless. Transferred to education, the institutions of the periphery were considered largely ineffective.

It is important to recall the essential role played by these institutions in their own communities. While center – periphery theory may be relevant in the area of economics, translated to the field of education the statements associated with this theory lacked a level of validity.

Marxist-Leninist Theory

This theory provided insight into, and permitted an understanding of, the relationship between institutions and the concepts that drove them. This theory described society as comprising a dominant super-structure and sub-structures (Cornforth, 1977). The superstructure informed the cultural norms of the society, and all sub-structural divisions, including education, were influenced by it. This theory held that educational norms were informed by the dominant culture, which worked to maintain the status quo. Institutions of the substructure therefore acted in ways that provided support to the institutional objectives of the superstructure. The superstructure provided the environment, the objectives and ideals of the society. The substructures simply reflected

those values which became the mores of these institutions, the “givens” which determined the nature of the goals of the organization.

The Human Capabilities Approach

Propounded by Amartya Sen as cited in Nussbaum, and utilized by Martha Nussbaum to analyze the situation of women (Nussbaum, 2001), the Human Capabilities approach stressed the importance of substantial freedoms. These include longevity, the ability to engage in economic transactions and to participate in political activities. The substantive freedoms accorded individuals were deemed by proponents of this theory more important than issues of perceived utility. Of primary importance to this concept was the ideal of individual choice. This perspective focused on individual development, and the freedom of the individual to maximize his or her own potential.

In developing this theme Martha Nussbaum (2001) created a list of human capabilities including: Life; Bodily Health; Bodily Integrity; Senses; Imagination and thought; Emotions; Practical reason; Affiliation; Other Species; Play; Political and Material control over one's environment. These human capabilities were determined by Nussbaum to be centrally important to human existence (Clark, 2005).

Supporters of this theory saw these themes as the ideal aims of any program of human resource development, training or education. This practical approach stressed the human side of human resource development. Translated to the context of Antigua and Barbuda, and the issue of equity and access, this theory resonated in concepts of human resource development that encompassed programs in tertiary education of a less

traditional nature, programs which spoke to the personal and practical aspects of education.

Summary

Human capital theory, later recognized as a branch of human capital economics, attempted to analyze people, development and management. Duration of schooling and levels of qualification, especially the extent to which the accumulation of knowledge and skills enabled individuals to increase their productivity and their earnings, were standard measures used to determine levels of human capital possessed by individuals. The underlying implication of a human capital perspective was that investment in knowledge and skills would bring economic returns.

Fundamental to Human Capital theory was the presumption that, through increased remuneration, the labor market rewarded those who invested in themselves. In “Learning to Labor”, Paul Willis (1977) cites the contention of Bowles and Gintis (cited in Willis, 1977), which recognized as erroneous the assumption of Human Capital theory that the victims of the education system, especially in the light of universal public education, were responsible for their own failure. This view completely negated a systemic explanation for educational inequality.

Drawing on the work of Durkheim, Weber, and most significantly, Karl Marx, Social Reproduction theory evolved as a counter to such assumptions of Human Capital Theory. Social Reproduction theorists posited that the distribution of credentials among individuals were related to social stratification, and were therefore determined to a large extent by issues of race, gender, and class (Zhang, 2003). This model saw education as working to maintain the status quo, in which the dominant classes maintained their

positions, while the underprivileged remained poor through the process of the intergenerational transmission of social inequality (Zhang, 2003).

Mirroring this idea, Paul Willis (1977), set out to show the dynamics of how systemically, working class behavior seemed to be reproduced generationally in the offspring of working class individuals, apparently “through their own activity and ideological development”(p. xi). In this way Willis attempted to counter “manipulation” theories (p. xi), by showing that these working class lads created their own “culture of resistance’ (p. xii). His cultural ethnographic approach intended to show how the “lads” of England “disqualified themselves from the opportunity to enter middle class jobs, and, instead, reproduced themselves as “rebellious uneducated workers whose single choice was the unskilled and semi-skilled occupations found in manual labor” (xii).

The theories subscribed to by institutions have a great potential for defining their operations. To a large extent the Dependency theory, and the Center Periphery theory were used by many economic and political pundits of the region to explain the economic and political situation of the English-speaking Caribbean. This perspective came to a large extent to determine the perception that countries of the region had of themselves, and the perception that other countries had of the countries of the region. This came to impact the development options and trajectory of the region.

These theories created the parameters and all impacted human resource development initiatives in Antigua and Barbuda: The perspective of human capital as a factor of production; the reality of the systemic nature of social reproduction, and concepts of dependency on the center economies; the Human Capabilities Approach and

its recognition of the function of education in maximizing human potential. These theories all played a part in determining the role of education in Antigua and Barbuda.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

The methodology of the research is qualitative with a policy focus. The aim of this research is to gain an understanding of opportunities that exist for people to access higher education in Antigua and Barbuda, in order to facilitate the design of policies to support and develop the sector. The research is based on interviews with key stakeholders and personnel involved in the tertiary education sector of this country. These interviews are supported by a review of documents, including studies, reports and existing statistics, and other print material. In this study, an effort was made to piece together the various disparate strands of information related to tertiary education in the country, to create a holistic picture of the sector, and to provide evidence of the need for an agency of higher education in the country, with a mandate to generate, compile, and maintain data on the sector. Such an agency could serve to provide the information necessary for planning and developing the sector, and the human resource base of the country.

It is hoped that this study will assist education planners in Antigua and Barbuda to develop procedures for enhancing access to higher education in the country, making it more attainable to a larger segment of the population. Improving participation rates and ensuring an equitable distribution of higher education services, would produce a population more equipped to survive in the new global world economic order. In a knowledge-based international economic order it is important that all segments of society be equipped to participate effectively. This would only be possible in the context of expanded access to higher education.

It was hoped that this research will provide the basis for further investigation into the topic, and lead to the institution of substantive changes in the education sector and greater participation in higher education, while safeguarding the important terrains of relevance and high standards in the education product.

This study was driven by the recognition that producing a highly skilled and educated population required a widespread and equitable distribution of educational opportunities; that higher education should not be disproportionately skewed in favor of the more privileged in society; that intellectual ability and talent are not the preserve of a privileged few, but are widely distributed throughout societies; and that the development of all potential is vital; that improving the numbers of people who have access to higher education is an important goal for societies; that policy and practice should ensure access to higher education for all segments of society, and an equitable distribution of opportunities throughout the entire community of Antigua and Barbuda.

The purpose of this study is to examine the trends in access to higher education in Antigua and Barbuda, to investigate to what extent national policy makers and higher education administrators promote and provide equitable access to higher education in the twin island state. In conducting this analysis, the researcher considers the implications for equitable participation in higher education through an investigation of the factors that affect access and equity of access to higher education in this country. To this end the study seeks to address the role of government and of higher education institutions in enhancing the rate and quality of participation in the nation.

Research Design

This was a qualitative case study using mixed methods, of the higher education system of Antigua and Barbuda. The investigation uses primarily qualitative methods, which generally speaking, denote research that produces findings arrived at by means other than statistics or procedures of quantification (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This research design was chosen for this study because it facilitates observation and interpretation of phenomena, as opposed to a quantitative research model which would rather focus on measuring relationships, and expressing the results in mathematical terms. Qualitative methods were deemed suitable to the investigative and exploratory nature of this study, and allowed for the inclusion of new trends as leads occurred through interview and observation. Qualitative design also allowed the researcher to discover why and how the situation had evolved in a particular direction, and the human, historical, cultural, sociological, economic, and other factors that were determinants of the situation being researched.

This study used a mixed methods approach to data collection. This incorporated the use of interviews, observation, reviews of existing documents, including reports, as well as historical, economic, and socio-cultural facts to make conclusions about the nature of access to higher education in the country. Qualitative design was relevant since this study hoped to gain a holistic view of the processes influencing the state of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda, to some extent via the perceptions and attitudes of participants.

This investigation took the form of a case study. A case study format was used to allow for an intense study of one island in the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM)

region. A respected expert in case study research, defined the case study as a type of empirical or observation based inquiry that explores a contemporary phenomenon in its authentic setting. Yin specifies that in case studies the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly defined, and that a variety of sources of evidence are relied on in case study research (Yin, 1989). In this dissertation the contemporary phenomenon under study was access and equity as these related to the low participation rates in higher education. The setting is Antigua/Barbuda. The boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are indeed blurred, hence the focus of this study.

In accordance with the case study technique as described by Stake (1988), another leading expert in this area of research, in this study the focus is on understanding the particulars of the system in question and not on the generality of the phenomenon as applied in international or regional contexts (Stake, 1988). Stake points out that case study facilitates the study of a system so that it can be understood in its own authentic setting. The focus therefore is on understanding the particularities of the case under study, and not in a generalized sense, as it may apply to class of similar subjects (Stake, 1988). Hence, in this study, an exploratory analysis was conducted of one unit in the Caribbean Community, the variables evaluated and the implications discussed.

This study conducted an examination of multiple perspectives. Methods of data collection included: observation, interviews, discussions, analysis of print materials including publications, news letters, newspapers, documents, and internet publications produced by the national government and institutions of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda, as well as institutions in the English speaking Caribbean region, analyses of records of education statistics, the viewpoints offered by administrators, government

officials, principals, instructors and students all provided invaluable information about the state of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda, reviews of statistics related to the education sector in Antigua and Barbuda as well as statistics and data generated by international organizations such as the World Bank and UNESCO related to the economic, social and cultural performance of Antigua and Barbuda, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) sub region in which the country is located, and the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) which comprises the larger regional body. Since the topic of access and equity can be interpreted from different viewpoints and may contain some level of bias, the gleaning of different interpretations through interviews helped to provide a clearer picture of this situation in Antigua and Barbuda.

Demographic Information

Formerly part of the British colonial system, Antigua and Barbuda acquired independence as a twin-island state in 1981. With a combined population of 82,800 and a land area of 170 square miles (442 square kilometers), this country is one of the smallest nation-states in the world (US Dept.of State, 2007).

The economy of the state comprises primarily three sectors: service, agricultural and trade sectors. The service sector includes tourism, banking and other financial services. The tourist industry is the largest income earner, and, along with related services, accounts for roughly 65 percent of the GDP (US Dept.of State). Agriculture consists mainly of fish, cotton, livestock, vegetables and pineapples. In 2005 the GDP was estimated at \$875.8 million with a growth rate of 3.2% (US Dept. of State, 2007). In

2004 the GDP per capita was calculated at \$12,586. In terms of trade, in 2005 the country exported \$58 million in merchandise, and \$454 million in commercial services (US Dept. of State, 2007). Major markets included the European Union, the United States, Anguilla, St. Kitts and Nevis and the Netherlands Antilles. During this same period the country imported \$497 million dollars in merchandise, and \$197 million dollars in commercial services (US Dept. of State, 2007). Major suppliers included the United States, the Netherlands Antilles, the European Union, Trinidad and Tobago and Canada. The country has no major mineral natural resources, but relies heavily on the balmy climate to support the Tourist industry (US Department of State- Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs- 1 December 2007). In 1995 the external debt was estimated at approximately US \$340 million. This represented an increase of \$70 million dollars, from \$270 million in 1992 (US Department of State website, 2008).

Antigua and Barbuda is generally considered to be politically and economically stable. According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Report, (2007/2008) on the Human Development Index (HDI), Antigua and Barbuda placed 57th in the international arena with a (HDI) of 0.815. The country was 54th in terms of life expectancy, with an average rate of 73.9 years. In the category of adult literacy, Antigua and Barbuda came in 74th in the world with an adult literacy rate of 85.8%. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is estimated at US \$12,500, which places the country at 53rd on the world scale (UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008).

The country is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government incorporating executive, legislative and judicial branches. The Queen of

England, as Head of State, appoints a representative, the Governor General, who acts on the advice of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; the legislative branch consists of a bicameral Parliament, comprising an Upper House, the Senate, and a Lower House, the Cabinet; and a judicial branch which is made up of the Magistrates' Courts, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, comprising the High Court and the Court of Appeals. Finally, the Privy Council in London serves as the final Court of Appeal.

Education in Antigua and Barbuda is free and compulsory for children aged from 5 to 16 years. There are approximately 32 public and 30 private primary schools on the islands, and a total primary population of 11,337 students (George, 2009). In the secondary sector, there are 18 junior secondary schools, twelve of which are government run. This sector has a total of 1,124 students. There are nineteen senior secondary (high) schools, nine of which are government controlled (George, 2009).

The system of education in Antigua and Barbuda is based on the British model of education. The primary division generally extends from pre-kindergarten to the fifth grade. At the end of the primary stage students sit the Common Entrance Exam, which they must pass in order to advance to secondary school. The secondary school section comprises Forms 1 through 5. In the fifth Form students sit the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Tests on individual subjects. Successful completion of a given number of these tests, five or six, in various configurations, at stipulated standards, is considered the lower level requirement for admission to the regional University.

In Antigua and Barbuda the local component of the higher education sector consists of the University of the West Indies, the Antigua State College (ASC), the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE), the Antigua and

Barbuda International Institute of Technology (ABIIT), the School of Nursing; The Hotel Training Institute, and two off shore American medical schools. The higher education sector thus has, to some extent, regional, local and international components.

The University of the West Indies represents the major degree granting institution in this system. Since the mid twentieth century this institution has constituted the main degree granting institution in the English-speaking Caribbean. Primarily located off-island, this institution has local components on most of the islands, including Antigua. Known as the UWI School of Continuing Education, this local branch of the higher education system offers primarily certificate programs, but allows students to begin degree studies on island, with the option of later concluding studies for the award of a degree at one of the main campuses. The School of Continuing Education thus allows students to complete the first two years of stipulated three year degree programs, generally in the faculties of Arts and Social Sciences, on island, before traveling to one of the major campuses in Barbados, Jamaica, or Trinidad, traditionally, to complete the degree program.

Howe (2005) reported that the tertiary sector in the English speaking Caribbean, has expanded to the order of some 150 institutions of which some 60% are public institutions, which are supported financially by the national governments of the countries in which they are located. The end of the twentieth, and the early part of the twenty-first century was marked by the institution throughout the region of off-shore distance providers, primarily American and British in origin. In Antigua and Barbuda the University of Health Sciences and The American University of Antigua College of Medicine were institutions of this type which operated as independent institutions. Some

institutions worked in affiliation with local institutions, sponsoring programs, and accepting transfer credits from these institutions for the award of degrees from their main institutions. In this regard Skidmore College collaborated with the Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology (ABIIT), allowing graduates of the Associate Degree programs to transfer credits to Skidmore's Bachelor's and Masters degree programs.

The University of the West Indies also had an articulation arrangement with the ASC Teacher training program, by which the Associate degree offered by this institution was accepted by the university, enabling candidates to gain credit for 2 of the 4 year degree program in Education. Pace University and Ithaca College in the United States also had similar arrangements with ABIIT.

The higher education sector in Antigua was estimated in 2004 at 16% of the age range (Roberts, 2006a). This represents one of the highest rates of participation in the Caribbean. However, as stated earlier, it lags behind the rates of participation in higher education of many other developing nations, and compares unfavorably with nations of the developing world. In order for this small nation to survive in the international community of nations it is imperative that rates of participation increase, and the higher education sector develop to meet internationally acceptable standards.

Research Questions and Data Sources

The research questions were designed to explore the status of the higher education division of the education system of Antigua and Barbuda. The intent was to discover to what extent the population of the country had access to higher education; and to what

extent were steps being made to produce a highly educated population. The table below shows the main research questions, their subdivisions, and the sources from which the information was solicited. The two main research questions guiding this study are:

What factors affect access and equity of access to higher education in Antigua and Barbuda? and what are tertiary institutions and the national government doing to promote access and to ensure equity of access to higher education in the state? Associated with the first question the research sought to establish (a) who gained access to higher educational opportunities, (b) to what extent sub-groups were equally represented in higher education, and (c) to identify factors that prohibited access to higher education. Related to the second question the research (a) investigated the role the national government played in promoting equitable access, (b) explored the role of institutions of higher education in promoting equitable access, and (c) considered the extent to which higher education institutions and the national government collaborated to promote increased and equitable participation in higher education.

In seeking to determine participation, data sources included higher education institutions; Ministry of Education records of college acceptance, attendance and scholarship awards; results of high stakes exams, results of the Common Entrance and Post Primary Examinations. The latter test determines students' acceptance to high school. The results of a poverty survey conducted in the twin-island state also contributed to an understanding of participation by region and socio-economic status.

The assessment of sub-group participation depended on the oral contributions of interviewed persons. In this regard senior officials in the Ministry of Education; school principals and assistant principals, past and present; senior government officials in

Table 1
Research Questions and Data Sources

<i>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</i>	<i>DATA SOURCES</i>
<p><u>1. What is the state of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?</u></p> <p>1.1 Who participates in higher education?</p> <p>1.2 Are sub-groups equally represented in higher education?</p> <p>1.3 What factors prohibit access to and equity of access to higher education?</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>1.1 Enrollment data of higher education institutions; Board of Education records of college acceptance/attendance, scholarship awards, and other awards of financial assistance; Board of Education records of performance on Common Entrance and Junior Secondary Examinations. Reports, Interviews</p> <p>1.2 Board of Education statistics of scholarship awards, Antigua State College statistics on participation, Poverty survey, Interviews, discussions, observation</p> <p>1.3 Interviews: higher education officials; secondary education officials (Chief Education Officer; principals/ vice principals; teachers), observation, Reports</p>
<p><u>2. What has been done at official levels to promote access and equity in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?</u></p> <p>2.1 What has the national government done to promote access and equity higher education?</p> <p>2.2 What have institutions of higher education done to promote access to and equity in higher education?</p> <p>2.3 To what extent have higher education and government collaborated to promote increased and more equitable levels of participation?</p>	<p>2.</p> <p>2.1 Interviews; Higher education officials; Board of Education officials; Internet search- Antigua and Barbuda govt. site, Reports</p> <p>2.2 Interview higher education officials: Directors and/ or administrative staff of higher education institutions (ABIIT, ABICE; UWI School of Continuing Education, ASC)</p> <p>2.3 Interview higher education officials, and education / government officials, Report</p>

ministries other than Education; as well as individuals familiar with the social work aspect of community development were able to provide expert insight into the participation in higher education. Other sources of data for this question included higher education records of participation, disaggregated by gender, as well as reports of admissions to institutions of higher education.

Identifying factors that prohibited access and equity was gleaned largely from the first round of interviews conducted. A wide spectrum of individuals was interviewed including Ministry of education officials, principals, teachers, and students. This strategy guaranteed a wide variety of perspectives. To a large extent the responses coincided, thus providing a clear perspective picture of the state of access and equity.

The role of the national government, higher education institutions and possible collaborative efforts between the two groups towards promoting access and equity was researched through an analysis of existing legislation and print media sources, and through discussions and interviews with key personnel in administrative roles in higher education as well as in the Ministry of Education.

Description of Referenced Variables

Equitable Access to Higher Education

Access to tertiary education has been defined as “the ability of people of all backgrounds to access higher education on a reasonably equal basis” (Global Higher Education Rankings, 2005, p.2). This definition, comprehensive in scope, took into account the issue of participation and equitability. It inferred that in the absence of the

ability of people of all backgrounds to “reasonably” be able to take advantage of educational opportunity, that an educational system cannot be considered “accessible.”

In the countries of the developed world including Antigua/Barbuda, opportunities for participating in higher education were limited. Consequently the development of such opportunity was of great significance to these countries. In fact, it could be argued, that the limited level of development of the higher education systems of these countries, resulted in the creation of opportunity being as significant as the issue of equitable access. For this reason only, and bearing in mind that access is truly not achieved unless it is equitable in nature, in this study the terms access and equity differentiate between increased opportunities and numbers of participants in the sector (access), and the extent to which all sections of society are included in higher education pursuits (equity). In the study, however, the concept of equitable access was the one most frequently invoked.

This study adopted as its conceptual base the analysis of access and equity posited by Vivienne Roberts (2003b). According to this perspective, access is not simply determined by the open door policy professed by institutions or systems. Rather “the size of the door, what lies in front of it, and the appeal of what lies beyond it, all impact on whether people avail themselves of the opportunity”(p.53). Roberts points out that “not everyone who wishes to enter is chosen”(p.53), “Enrollment in tertiary education is therefore only a crude and limited indicator of access”(p.53). Roberts argues that access is influenced by equality of educational opportunity; by the attainment of entrance criteria, by the post- higher education opportunities that exist, and by the issue of supply. She proposes the concept of “Differential Access” which pits access and merit on the one hand, against access and equity on the other. This brings into question the efficiency

of the system of meritocracy, which focuses on competition and selection based on equal achievement (Roberts, 2003b). The degree of access of a system is also considered important. This concept holds that Universal Access is an ideal, since in all systems resources limit supply, and innate ability, individual achievement, individual preferences and personal resources limit demand.

With the advance towards mass participation in higher education there was increased access and opportunity. These increases also drew attention to the issue of equity, and to those categories of people who were to some extent unfairly disadvantaged in the process, who were not equitably guaranteed the opportunities to engage in higher education that were increasingly available to other members of society. (Connell, 2000).

Connell (2000) identified different categories of inequity that exist in systems of higher education, some of which are indeed evident in the Antigua and Barbuda higher education system. He identifies Structural Inequities, which he describes as inequities that are rooted in the system, and are part of the institutional structure. These are often inherited, or derived from the historical evolution of the institution or the environment in which they exist. Attitudinal/ Behavioral inequities emerge through the functioning of individuals and groups. This category he defines as including patronage and corruption in the system. The third group of inequities, classified as Organizational and Programmatic, are caused by the malfunctioning of information flows, or access arrangements relating to admissions and other procedures (Connell, 2000).

Equitable access, contrastingly, alongside merit, considers the importance of corrective measures to compensate for disadvantage. According to this concept equality of treatment and equal protection under the law in terms of gender, class, religion and

ethnicity are considered necessary conditions of open access. Students are not to be held back by factors unrelated to their ability. This concept recognizes that many tertiary education institutions which use principles of meritocracy to facilitate access, are guilty of basing participation on unadjusted equality of opportunity. The presence of historical or societal disadvantage inherent in this method of access is seen as perpetuating inequity. Bell (as cited in Roberts, 2003b) argues that access based on merit produces inequity because it creates a social order founded on the priority of educational talent.

On the access scale, institutions span the gamut from limited at one end, to universal at the other. Kerr (as cited in Roberts, 2003b) categorizes institutions by the degree of difficulty associated with entrance. Highly selective institutions usually have exclusive entry qualifications which are achieved by only a small proportion of the population, and are usually elitist in orientation; selective institutions are more oriented to mass access; and non-selective institutions find a place for anyone. Equity in access to higher education is seen as a mechanism for safeguarding democracy, by protecting the cultural, economic, and social structures of society.

The issue of access to higher education and the equitable nature of determining who participates are critical to the economic and social development of the nations of the world, including Antigua and Barbuda. The modern world is in a race to education. In his book *The World is Flat*, Thomas Friedman (2005) describes the educational and economic progress of different areas of the developing world: China, India, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Latin America. Friedman advises that those countries which most quickly master the habits, processes and skills most quickly will be the winners. Most of these required skills are acquired in a higher education environment (Caperton,

2005). The flip side of this advice suggests, that those who fail to acquire the requisite skills in this new global village, will certainly be losers. Antigua and Barbuda cannot afford to sustain the economic and social losses contingent on such failure.

The problem of access and the corresponding issue of equity have been raised in a number of fora which address the issue in the Caribbean. Poon-Kwong (2006) recounts how CARICOM Ministers of Education recurrently cited access, equity and quality as core challenges for the regional educational system. This analyst notes that the increase in enrollments corresponding to Martin Trow's analysis of the movement towards mass education, and away from the elitist variety has created a situation of demand greatly exceeding supply. UNESCO and the World Bank along with other regional and international organizations also noted the low participation rates in higher education of this area of the world, and discuss the importance of raising the rate of participation within the region.

Research Methods and Interview Protocol

Questions were designed to gather specific information and to elicit the views of participants. Interview responses were recorded and transcribed. Responses were then summarized by the groups indicated, to see if patterns of responses would emerge. Appendix B contains the group summaries. A complete summary of responses by question was then carried out to create the overall picture painted by participant responses. These cumulative responses are noted in the Results section. The questions posed, and the rationale for their construction follow:

First Round of Interviews

Two rounds of interviews were conducted. The first was conducted in December of 2007. Questions during the first round were designed to gather information and to elicit the views of participants related to their perspective of the nature of and access to higher education in the nation. Each interviewee was asked an identical set of seven questions regarding their views and or personal experiences of the higher education sector. Interviews lasted from twenty minutes to two hours. This round focused on participants' views and experience of opportunities for participation in higher education offered in the nation, their views of higher education institutions and their reasons for opting for various institutions. This round also focused on participants' perception of the issue of accessibility to higher education, and some things that prohibited access to some segments of the population. Participants' were also canvassed for their views of the role of the government in promoting access and equity to all segments of the population.

Interview responses were recorded and transcribed. Responses during this phase of the research were then grouped, for emerging patterns of response. Appendix B contains the group summaries. A summary of responses by question was also created to determine the overall picture painted by participant responses. These cumulative responses are noted in the Results section. The questions posed, and the rationale for their construction follows.

The first question was "Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?" The obvious goal of this question was to identify whether persons interviewed had attended the UWI, and under what circumstances they had done so: as scholarship recipients, as paying students; or as government employees sent for further training. The question sought to find out why they had chosen or decided to attend: was this institution their first

choice, or was it chosen as the most financially feasible alternative, or for its location within the region? This question was also intended to elicit reactions to the regional University. One school of thought sees the University as a poor cousin of the higher education sector of the developed world, while it is considered by some as an institution of high standing and quality modeled on institutions of the British system of higher education. This question sought to discover where on the continuum participants stood, and by extension where people in Antigua and Barbuda stood.

The second question “In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?” was posed to find out how participants, and by extension the (education) community, viewed the issue of access. Was access accepted unquestioningly as being concerned solely with the ability to gain acceptance to institutions of higher education. Was it accepted unquestioningly that all students enrolled in a secondary institution had access to higher education? Were participants aware of the social and economic ramifications of access associated with higher education?

The third question, “would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response”, addressed the perspective held of the university. This question was designed to find out how effectively information regarding the application process, and academic requirements for attendance to higher education were transmitted. It also encouraged participants to reveal their perspectives regarding the admissions process, and the level of information disseminated about gaining admission to the regional university. It encouraged discussion of who was eligible and on what basis; as well as whether the university was doing enough to expand access to non-traditional populations.

Question four “what, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?” encouraged participants to describe the efforts of the political elite in promoting and enhancing opportunities for higher education. Participants were required to describe their perspective of governmental involvement: was the government making an effort to increase access to higher education, and to ensure that access was equitable? It also encouraged them to prescribe measures which the government should take to improve higher education services to the community. The question also hoped to elicit participants’ views of the government’s awareness of, and commitment to, the imperative of preparing an educated population, equipped with the skills and information to ensure economic survival in the knowledge society.

Question five “Is higher education in Antigua and Barbuda provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response”, dealt directly with the question of equity. Participants were encouraged to consider the economic and social class distinctions in the society, and to make a value judgment about whether some citizens were treated less equitably than others; and to what extent, if at all, efforts were being made to balance the inequities of the social system to enable previously disenfranchised citizens of the twin-island state to participate equitably in the higher education sector.

Question six asked the question “how would you rate the quality of the preparation, provided at primary and secondary school levels, in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies. This question required participants to determine the adequacy of primary and secondary education services on the twin-island state, and the alignment of these curricula with the tertiary sector.

Participants were also prompted to take into account failures at the earlier levels of the education system, and the implications of such failure for future ventures by this group into the tertiary sector.

Question seven asked “what improvements would you suggest to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?” Coming at the end of the interviews this final question led participants to again consider necessary improvements to the education sector to equip a greater number of citizens across the social and economic spectrum of the society, to gain access to higher education services, and to be successful in these pursuits.

Second Round of Interviews

The second round of interviews was conducted from July 2008 to March of 2009. This round centered on discovering the role of higher education institutions and government agencies in promoting access to higher education. This round sought to elicit from national agencies and higher education establishments reports on actions taken by these bodies individually, and where possible, cooperatively; to determine to what extent these bodies focused on the goal of making higher education accessible and equitable; proposed measures and passed legislation to this effect.

In this round interviews were conducted with individuals which included some principals and/ or leaders, present and past of some of the institutions of higher education in the country, as well as the heads of the national agencies involved in the higher education and general education sector. In some cases this necessitated a second round of interviews with individuals previously interviewed. Past and present officials of ABICE,

ABITT, ASC, UWI School of Continuing Education, were interviewed during this round. Some of the questions in this phase flowed from the results of phase one of the interview protocol. The first phase of interviews resulted in the identification by interview candidates of areas integral to the issue of access and equity to higher education in the twin-island state.

The main question in the second round is What has been done at official levels to promote access to and equity in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda? The subsidiary questions are: (a) What has the national government done to promote access to and equity of access in higher education? (Are there agreements between higher education and the national government, designed to increase equitable participation in higher education?) (b) What have institutions of higher education done to promote access and equity e.g. admissions policies; alignment with other institutions locally, regionally and internationally? (Have any policies or arrangements been instituted between institutions of higher education, laterally or horizontally, with the intention of furthering the ideals of increased and more equitable access to higher education?) (c) To what extent have higher education and government collaborated to promote increased and more equitable levels of participation? (Are there any agreements, proposed or existing legislation, instituted by the national government in collaboration with institutions of higher education, with the objective of improving access to higher education?)

Data Collection- First Round of Interviews

Participants

In the first round 21 individuals were interviewed. They all received their early

(primary and secondary) training in Antigua and Barbuda. These persons were selected to represent different strata of the society, and different educational experiences. Group one consisted of individuals who had all attended the UWI for some level of post-graduate training. These included: the present and previous top officials in the Ministry of Education; a former Principal of an Institution of higher education; two ssenior government officials who occupied top posts in their respective departments. Two of these participants had also pursued degree studies outside the region.

The second group comprised individuals who graduated from the UWI with undergraduate degrees, but gained Masters degrees extra-regionally. These candidates were chosen for their depth of understanding of the UWI system, as well as having comparative perspective of external systems, based on experience. Both were educators.

Individuals in the third category were graduates of the primary and elementary school system who pursued higher education extra-regionally. This group's perspective on regional higher education would not be based on experience, and therefore offered a different perspective on UWI and access to this institution.

The fourth group comprised teachers enrolled in the Associate degree program offered by the Antigua State College under the auspices of the University of the West Indies. Their responses represented the perspectives of educators in the field who were non-traditional students.

The fifth group were graduates of the UWI continuing studies degree programs. They were also non-traditional students. These participants could offer additional insight into the continuing education program. One participant was a graduate of the UWI undergraduate degree conducted at a campus territory, and the UWI Executive MBA

conducted via the University of the West Indies distance education program (UWIDITE). This participant could offer some insight into this program's potential to increase rates of participation in higher education.

The sixth group consisted of participants who did not fall into any of the previous categories. One had completed the advanced level program (CAPE), and after working in the Civil Service was seeking entrance to higher education; one was a veteran Electrician, and one candidate was a Social Worker who had pursued certificate studies at the UWI. The final candidate was a graduate of the Spring Garden Moravian Teacher's Training Program that operated from 1854-1958. This candidate served 52 years as a teacher in a well-reputed private school, and served as Acting Principal. This latter group might give a picture of the issue more in alignment with the perspectives of the society at large.

Other groupings. The group also comprised different elements of the society: teachers, education administrators, residents of Barbuda, residents of Antigua; non-educators. Of the 21 people interviewed, 16 were from Antigua. Five were from Barbuda. The community was well represented. Of the group, 4 persons interviewed were education administrators, 7 were teachers, 7 were students, 1 was a guidance counselor, and 1 was a member of the clergy. There was 1 social worker. There were 4 civil servants. A number of the candidates crossed categories. Interview participants came from many different areas of the twin island state. The choice of participants was designed so that together the group would represent a cross section of the population of Antigua and Barbuda, and hopefully their insights and perspectives would also reflect those of the population at large.

Table 2

Grouping of Interview Respondents – First Round

	<i>Antigua</i>	<i>Barbuda</i>
<i>Educational Administrators</i> (Ministry officials –Past/Present, HE Past)	4	0
<i>Educational Instructors</i> (Secondary and primary levels)	4	2
<i>Non-traditional Students</i> (Mature students)	4	2 1 (traditional)
<i>Civil Servants/</i> (Counselors/Social Workers/ Private sector /Clergy)	4	2

The table above depicts an alternative grouping of respondents. Some participants fell into more than one category. In the case of Barbuda, the 2 Educational Instructors were also non-traditional students. In this case study the information yielded by interviews, data sources and insight gained via personal observations and experience were combined to form a total picture of access to and equity in accessing higher education. In addition, the researcher, having lived in this country, participated in the school system, attended the UWI as a student, worked in the school system as a teacher, is able offer a perspective which benefits from a comprehensive perspective of the education processes and system of Antigua and Barbuda.

Secondary Round of Interviews

Participants

The second round of interviews focused on discovering what actions, if any, had been taken by the national government and institutions of higher education, to specifically target increased access to higher education services, and the active promotion of equity of access. In this second round high ranking officials of higher education institutions and the national government were targeted, in an effort to obtain information that was accurate in relation to actions taken by these groups to promote access and equity of access.

The persons interviewed in this round included: Directors and principals of higher education institutions, including officials of ABIIT, the Antigua State College, the University of the West Indies Continuing Education Program; an the teacher training program of the ASC, the Chief official of the Ministry of Education, and other education officials and school administrators, an official in the Ministry of Agriculture; and officials of the department of Foreign Affairs.

The data to be collected during this round from government officials would take the form of existing or planned legislation, draft legislation, policies or expressions of intent designed to increase access and equity in higher education. The Board of Education officials interviewed during this round were chosen for their strategic functions in the Ministry of Education, and an awareness of the policies adopted in the Ministry. These officials would know to what extent and in exactly which ways government worked in tandem with higher education to increase access and promote equity.

These officials would have an insight into the performance of the education sector, as well as the fluctuations in performance. Certain of these officials would also have insight into performance rates of the different sections of the country, and specific actions taken by government, if any, to scaffold faltering groups of students, students who would otherwise be in danger of falling through the cracks of the system.

Officials in the Ministry of Education work directly with the preparation of students at all levels, the awarding of scholarships, and the placement of students in higher education institutions. These officials would be knowledgeable about all levels and aspects of the education process, the scholarships awarded; student acceptances to institutions of higher education; grants awarded; monies expended by the national government for the support of students pursuing higher education. These individuals would also be aware of sources of external support for higher education.

Agriculture is a main industry in Antigua and Barbuda. It is a major industry, since most nations generally aspire to produce enough to feed their populations and export the surplus. It is also a mainstay of the economy, and a producer of scarce foreign exchange earnings. Plans are always afoot to improve the performance of this sector through training of workers. The official interviewed in this department was therefore considered an effective source of information relating to training opportunities which could bypass the Ministry of Education, and are channeled directly through specific ministries. Due to this Ministry's involvement with the school food program, this individual could also offer insight into this aspect of the government's role in supporting equity at the earlier education levels.

In the department of Foreign Affairs, the choice of senior diplomats as

interviewees, was based on the assumption that these individuals would be aware of many of the bilateral agreements forged with friendly nations, many of which attach training and higher education opportunities for nationals. Many scholarships obtained via such agreements have been routed through the Ministry of Education, however, one question which needed to be explored via this individual, was whether all training opportunities were directed through the Ministry, or whether some were directed to the relevant departments. The main issue revolved around the questions of how these scholarships were accessed, and considerations of distribution. A main concern was what extent access and equity were served in the distribution scheme.

In seeking to discover the actions taken by higher education institutions to promote access and equity, top officials of three higher education institutions were interviewed. Officials were consulted to find out whether the institution had admissions policies which enhanced access allowing previously excluded groups to gain access; whether these institutions had sending or receiving policies with other institutions locally, regionally or internationally which allowed students admission to, and the ability to continue through various levels and programs of education.

The individuals who participated in round two of the interview section of the data collection process offered insight into the perspectives held by the national government and the institutions of the higher education relating to access and equitability of access in higher education, as evidenced by policy, legislation, budgetary processes, and statements of intent.

In a number of cases interviews in this round tended to focus on the main questions in a more unstructured format, allowing individuals to express their opinions

widely on the various issues, thus allowing greater insight into the functioning of the system. Many of the questions asked during this session were geared more specifically to the individual being interviewed, and their specific area of expertise.

Documents and Print Material

Other sources of data collection included documents, articles and statistical information from the Board of Education and the other institutions which were reviewed, to gain insight into the situation of education in the country. A search was made to identify relevant legislation related to the development of the educational environment in this country.

Documents containing information pertinent to the topic fell basically into three categories: (a) Reports on the history and real time situation of education in the country. In this regard a number of documents in particular were relied upon, including: *The National Report on Higher Education in Antigua and Barbuda* prepared by Dr. V. Roberts (2006a); A study conducted on the living situation of people on the island entitled *Living Conditions in Antigua and Barbuda: Poverty in a Services Economy in Transition* (Kariri Consultants, 2007). These documents used historical, statistical, and other data to come to conclusions about the state of the education in the country. (b) Statistical profiles on the country's education and social sectors: Here the *Human Development Report, 2007-2008* and *Education For all Country Report for Antigua (2000)* provided statistical information on the education sector in Antigua and Barbuda. Finally, (c) perspectives on the national development imperatives of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) sub-region, including Antigua/Barbuda, and the

strategies required to equip the region with the required human resource skills for the twenty-first century were outlined in a World Bank report entitled *Does the Eastern Caribbean Education System Adequately Prepare Youth for the Global Economy?* (2008). and the *OECS Education Reform Strategy* gave insights into some possible measures, designed by the education committee of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, for resolving the issues faced by the education sector at all levels in the sub-region. Information from documents, reports and interviews were combined with personal observations and an understanding of the system to create a holistic picture of access to and equity in higher education in Antigua/Barbuda.

Data Analysis

In an article entitled *An Institutional Research Approach to Access and Equity Analysis*, Ian Dobson (1997) of Monash University proposed the use of an 'institutional research' methodology which could be used for enquiry into designated equity groups in Australia (Dobson, 1997). In order to achieve equity in higher education, policies must be designed and implemented. Maasen and Sharma (1991) outline the important steps in conducting institutional research. These include gathering information and data on the performance of the institution or institutions being studied, as well as the environmental context. The next step is to analyze and interpret the data gathered. Finally, to translate these results into policies and action for transforming the situation (Maasen & Sharma, 1991). In the case of Antigua and Barbuda, a small education system, it is anticipated that the analysis and implementing of an equity policy for this system of education should be less complicated than a larger system.

In this study data on institutional performance will be used to determine patterns of access to higher education, and to assess the levels of access by making an assessment of how individuals access this system. Levels of participation throughout the system and across various sections of the country will be assessed, and a determination will be made of the extent to which access to higher education could be considered equitable.

The first process in analyzing the data was to make sense of the data collected in the interview segments (Creswell, 2009). The process of analyzing the interviews began simultaneously with the data collection. Small notes were written that would later help the researcher to determine the main themes that emerged.

In the interview sessions, the interview questions served to stimulate the conversation, and a lot of open-ended data were collected. Interviews were transcribed and read and reread to gain an understanding of what participants were saying. Interviews were then grouped by type of participant and summaries were created for each group. This helped significantly in paring down the data and extracting the main themes. These themes then became the main ideas around which the study was conducted.

As more interviews were conducted the researcher simultaneously analyzed data, making notes on points of interest which arose, and further points to be considered and explored. Small commentaries in note form were placed next to data collected from interviews that arose as a matter of personal observation. Data collected from interviews were compared to, and often supported by documentary analyses and statistical data.

Creswell (2009) recommends eight strategies for assessing the accuracy of findings. For this study credibility was established by using triangulating different data sources, member checking, prolonged time in the field, and peer debriefing. In the first

instance data from interviews were triangulated by data from reports and statistical data from government departments and higher education sources. Member checking was done with a number of individuals interviewed to ensure that interpretations of interviews accurately reflected participants' ideas. The researcher has spent prolonged time in the field by virtue of having spent most of her life in the environment under study. Peer debriefing occurred with a number of individuals who vetted the information and posed questions and played devil's advocates to ensure the soundness of themes and findings.

Chapter IV

Results of the Study

Introduction

This study explored the state of higher education in the twin-island nation state of Antigua and Barbuda, and the levels of access and equity in the system. Constructed as a qualitative study of policy, the focus of this investigation was the description of the structure of higher education in the country, and a consideration of the levels of access and equity available in this sector. The study also analyzed the roles played by higher education institutions and the national government, in increasing access to and equity in higher education.

One purpose of this study was to conduct an investigation that could hopefully constitute a step towards the ultimate cohesion of the separate institutions of the country into a unified sector. Compiling information relative to higher education in this country, and analyzing the pros and cons related to its development and expansion, it is hoped, might contribute to the process of constructing an integrated, seamless higher education division. Such a sector would facilitate the movement of students of varying abilities from one level of the system to the next, affording students the opportunity for access to learning experiences articulated both vertically and horizontally, as well as providing access to life long learning opportunities. This division would constitute an important component of an education system equipped to produce a work force able to successfully face the economic and technological challenges of the global knowledge society.

This chapter of the study describes the past and current status of the higher education sector. It reviews the history of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda, and describes the modern status of higher education in the country, including the financing structure. This chapter undertakes an analysis of the socio-economic context of higher education in the country. It describes some economic and social disparities that exist within the educational system which influence patterns of access and equity in the higher education sector.

Background

The Socio-Economic Context of Education in Antigua and Barbuda

An understanding of the socio-economic status of the island is integral in a consideration of access and equity. In places where extreme poverty exists, the issue of access to higher education is of a less urgent nature; priority of focus is rather on filling scarce human resource needs. Considerations of equity of opportunity seem to arise more prominently where there are pockets of poverty in countries that are relatively affluent. An example of this is the United States where racial segregation and discrimination led to widening disparities between different groups of people. In most developing countries disparities of social and economic status are a chief barrier to equity of access to higher education, and considerations of equity in educational services stems, not only from concepts of justice and human rights, but are also based on considerations of the economic survival of these nations in the international economic arena.

As a developing country Antigua and Barbuda has a stable socio-economic and political system, capable of developing and sustaining strong service sectors such as

health, education and social services. A survey (Kariri Consultants, 2007) conducted to determine the levels of poverty on the island determined that:

The citizenry of Antigua and Barbuda live in a modern economy, with societal structures that accord the rights to all, consistent with the highest principals set by the intellectual community through such agencies as the United Nations and its various organizations (Kariri Consultants, 2007, p.31).

This finding of the poverty survey of the country, if confirmed, establishes some parameters for a discussion on equity of access to higher education. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), in their determination of the Human Development Index (2007/2008) of 170 nations, positioned Antigua and Barbuda in the 59th place, which provides evidence of the country's ability to resolve social and economic problems effectively. This ranking suggests that the country has the capacity to adequately address issues related to human resource development, and the establishment of a vibrant and functional higher education sector.

Further support for this contention is provided by the cruise ship arrival record. The sub-regional Caribbean integration arrangement, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has a combined GDP of \$ 2,886,000. The country with the lowest GDP per capita is Saint Vincent and the Grenadines at US\$ 3,403.00 (Roberts, 2006b). Antigua and Barbuda represents one of the most affluent of this group. In 2004 Cruise ship arrivals for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines amounted to \$86,700.00 as compared to Antigua and Barbuda, which netted \$245,500.00 (Roberts, 2006b).

It is worthy of note that while St. Vincent and the Grenadines spends 9.3% of their GDP on education, Antigua spends only 3.2% (Roberts, 2003b). However this

figure though low as a percentage of GDP, may actually represent higher dollar amounts than that expended by St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These percentages may however be a reflection of the degree of importance associated with the sector by the political elite, and reflects the level of commitment of the national government to developing its higher education sector.

According to statistics revealed in the Antigua and Barbuda budget statement, 2008, in terms of economic trends for 2007, the global economy was projected to expand at a rate of 5.2%. The Chinese economy grew by 11.5%, India's growth rate exceeded 9%, and Russia weighed in at about 8%. The powerful economy of the United States grew at around 2.25% in the first half of 2007. The Canadian economy grew 3.7% in the first quarter of 2007 and 2.8% in the second quarter. The United Kingdom was expected to increase growth rate by 3.1%, and Japan's growth rate was estimated at 2% for this same year. These rates of growth in the developed nations of the world were fuelled by a combination of a variety of factors related to their economic strength, including improved terms of trade; high commodity prices, strong domestic demand, favorable external environment and growth in exports (Antigua and Barbuda Budget Statement, 2008). Projections indicated an expected slow down in global economic output for the 2008 fiscal year.

In 2006 the English speaking Caribbean had a growth rate of 8.4% (Antigua and Barbuda Budget Statement, 2007). For 2007 it was estimated that growth would be around 6% due to the slowdown in the areas of investment and the construction industry. A further decrease to 4.4 was projected for 2008. In terms of individual performance Trinidad and Tobago had an expected growth rate of 6% for 2007 due to strong energy

manufacturing, construction and private sectors, with an expected decrease to 5.8% for 2008. Jamaica had an anticipated growth rate of 1.4%, with a projected growth of 2% in 2008. For 2007 Barbados had an expected growth rate of 4.2%, with a projected growth rate of 2.7% in 2008.

In contrast to many of the surrounding territories Antigua and Barbuda's economic performance for 2007 was robust, with an economic growth rate of over 7%. It is estimated that between 2004 and 2007 the construction industry grew at a rate of 17%. Similarly there were increases in the tourist sector, the wholesale and retail trades also reflected a positive economic performance. On the whole Antigua and Barbuda's economic performance was creditable. This economic performance was not echoed in all the territories of the OECS. By contrast St. Vincent and St. Lucia did not have as robust economic yields as Antigua and Barbuda. For the fiscal year 2005, St. Lucia had a .5% rate of increase (St. Lucia Budget Statement, 2006).

A comparison of the budget statements St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Antigua and Barbuda reveals that while socio-economic performance may be a strong indicator of the capacity of a country to support higher education services, it is not always a determinant of a country's tendency in that direction. While St. Lucia's economic performance in the OECS, based on current figures, does not appear to be as robust as that of Antigua, the former appears to be further ahead in the development of its higher education sector. St. Lucia, with a less robust economy, has sophisticated plans to expand its higher education sector, which already has degree granting status at the Bachelor's level, and a state of the art college campus. By contrast the 2008 Budget Statement of Antigua and Barbuda made little mention of higher education. References were confined to the recipients of

scholarship awards from donor countries such as Cuba, Mexico, China, and the allocation of 'donor funds' to the expansion of the Antigua State College.

Antigua and Barbuda's economy is therefore one of the most developed in the English speaking Caribbean area. The standard of living is considered high, and shows a marked improvement from the colonial period when the majority of the population lived in relative poverty. The tourist industry, import substitution ventures, and agriculture produced a degree of economic growth in the country. However all communities were not equally affected, and levels of inequality and economic imbalance between communities resulted. The poverty survey describing household conditions across the island shows clearly that economic disparity exists among various regions of the country (Kariri Consultants, 2007).

Inequality between regions has the potential to augment with time. Income inequality between regions can influence educational attainment between regions, and lead to educational inequality. This can lead to further disparities in income levels and quality of life issues. A cyclical pattern of institutionalized income disparities and poverty in certain areas, and relative affluence in others, can result.

While Antigua and Barbuda's economic ventures have helped to some extent to mitigate the effects of slavery and colonization, and have helped to secure financial gains for many of the poor, disparities exist between groups and regions. The poverty survey conducted (Kariri Consultants, 2007) suggested that the wealthiest 20 % accounted for 55 % of national expenditure, while the poorest 40 % of households accounted for a mere 20 % of expenditure. The top 20 % of the economic strata expended approximately 4 times

more than the poorest 40%. This gives an idea of the disparities of wealth existing in this small country (Kariri Consultants, 2007).

Economic and Social Disparities in the Educational System

The Poverty study (Kariri Consultants, 2007) researchers conducted a survey of the educational attainment of poor persons 15 years old and above. The people in this part of the study were deemed to be below the poverty line. Of this group while 22.3% had at most a primary education, over 42% had attained some level of secondary education, and 4.4 had some level of tertiary education. The study revealed that a relationship existed between level of education and economic status. The study found that the chances of the household being poor was reduced by 91 percent when the household head had at least a primary education, as compared to household heads who had no education. The study also found that the odds of being poor fell 41% with secondary education, and only 26% with tertiary education. It provided evidence that there were regional disparities between levels of educational attainment. The study found that St. Phillips parish, in which are located the towns of Willikies and Freetown, and St. John's city, the capital, are the areas of greatest poverty (Kariri Consultants, 2007). This correlates with statistics that show low educational performance in these areas.

This leads to a conclusion that inequity of educational opportunity also has a regional component, and that solutions to addressing the imbalance should take into account strategies that specifically target areas of poverty, and provide scaffolding measures to address this imbalance at all levels of the educational ladder.

It appears that plans to upgrade the higher education sector do not identify strategies for specifically addressing equitable access, with the goal that all students are able, if they so desire, to access higher education. Inequity of educational opportunity appears to have a regional component, which is related to the socio-economic situation of specific areas. It is clear that strategies for addressing inequity must target these areas and provide scaffolding measures to assist students from these areas to access higher education.

More important are the problems faced at the earlier levels. In fact, in a magazine article entitled “Where Studyation Meets Education” included in a booklet commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the nation’s independence, the Chief Education Officer described the greatest challenge to the education sector as being the primary level, where the rate of students passing the Common Entrance Examination, and gaining high school entrance, was only 66% (Isaac, 2006). It has been said, and truly said, that the greatest inhibitor to attaining higher education is a weak educational experience at the earlier education levels.

In summary, Antigua and Barbuda has a relatively strong socio-economic structure. The economic performance of this country is stronger than many others in the region. It is clear however that in Antigua and Barbuda the share of economic resources allocated to education is insufficient to achieve this objective. It is also clear that the resources required to support and pursue educational excellence have not been budgeted to the sector at any level.

History of Higher Education in Antigua and Barbuda

The higher education sector of Antigua and Barbuda is in its nascent phase (Roberts, 2006a). As part of the wider Caribbean system of education, and higher education, this country's involvement in formal higher education began as recently as 1948 with the establishment of the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, and its subsequent expansion to Barbados and Trinidad in the 1960s. The earliest forms of higher education in the region however, began with the church based institutions, which set out largely to provide teachers, ministers and health professionals for the region (Howe, 2005; Roberts, 2006a)

Higher Education in Antigua and Barbuda began with the establishment of a branch of the Mico Teachers' College in 1834. The Moravian religious sect, engaged in the teaching of enslaved Africans, after emancipation sought to formalize these efforts by establishing schools. By 1828 there were a number of schools established in Antigua (Roberts, 2006a). This created a need for teachers. The Negro Education Fund was established by the Imperial government for the training of teachers. A shortage of trained teachers created the need to train locals for these positions. This led to the establishment of the Mico colleges in Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda and Trinidad in 1834. The Antigua Branch was subsequently replaced by the Spring Garden Moravian Teachers' College.

This form of specialized institution was the first phase of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda (Roberts, 2006a). Until the early twentieth century, higher education in Antigua and Barbuda was characterized by this system of specialized institutions. The following timeline describes the evolution of the higher education sector in Antigua and Barbuda: The Mico Teachers' College, 1884; the School of Nursing, 1956; the Government Training College, the offshoot of the Spring Garden Moravian College, 1959; the Golden Grove

Technical College, 1972; the Antigua Hotel Training Center, 1991; the Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology, 1994; and the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education, 2005 (Roberts, 2006a).

Roberts (2006a) describes how the establishment of the University College of the West Indies in 1948 resulted in the institution of a two-tiered or “parallel” system of education, comprising the local specialized institutions and the University College of the West Indies, as a “more comprehensive and advanced” form of higher education (Roberts, 2006a).

Throughout the region a similar pattern of parallel higher education developed. Schools of nursing, theological colleges and schools of education were established early in the region’s modern history. This was followed by the institution of other types of specialized schools. These institutions operated alongside the University of the West Indies.

The University of the West Indies was soon to lose its status as the sole comprehensive university in the region. Other local universities began to be established in various territories in response to the need for improved human resource skills. Often these were preceded by the institution of community colleges or state colleges, offering a combination of technical/ vocational and academic training, culminating in a variety of certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees. In some territories these institutions were upgraded to full university status. Foreign providers also began to establish themselves in these territories. In Antigua and Barbuda Ithaca College and Leicester University, respectively of American and British origin, were among other institutions offering higher education services to the country. The higher educational landscape in Antigua and Barbuda thus comprised local, regional, and international components. The ideals of a

globalized education system already therefore existed in this system, if in somewhat primitive form.

Friday (as cited in Roberts, 2003 p.49), states that dissatisfaction with the UWI as well as the limited access provided to students of the non-campus territories led to the establishment of multi-purpose tertiary institutions. In the OECS, including Antigua and Barbuda, this led to the institution of Community colleges, and State Colleges. These institutions responded to human resource development needs, were multipurposed, cost effective institutions, that, among other objectives, fulfilled “the need to strengthen national identity” (Roberts, 2003b, p.49).

The higher education landscape of Antigua and Barbuda thus came to be characterized by local specialized schools, a regional academically oriented university with four main campuses, and continuing education departments across the region, and an international component, comprising various foreign institutions which had established units on the islands. To be coherent, such a system would require the implementation of a system of checks and balances to ensure the delivery of services of a high quality, as well as articulation measures to facilitate smooth transition throughout the system.

Accreditation processes needed to be instituted to ensure that courses of study undertaken by students in one institution, would be recognized by all other institutions at the local level, both regionally and internationally. Facilitating horizontal and vertical alignment would help to construct in the country a coherent system of higher education, allowing students the opportunity to enter the higher education sector at the remedial level if necessary, and progress unimpeded through the system. Such an institutionally designed strategy of coherence would facilitate movement between institutions.

Description of the Higher Education Sector

Understanding the structure and nature of the higher education sector is essential to understanding and analyzing the issue of access and equity. The structure of the sector determines, to an extent, the level of accessibility inherent in the system. If the ability to participate is based on criteria which are outside the reach of most of the population, then that system cannot be considered as supporting access to higher education. One of the criticisms often leveled at systems evolving from British colonialism concerns their rigid and rigorous nature. Traditionally, this system was characterized by rigorous standards at the earlier levels of education. Some students exited the system as early as the end of the elementary school years, having failed to meet the requirements to graduate to the secondary school level. In these systems second chance options were rare.

In the Caribbean the influence of the United States educational system provided somewhat of a mitigating factor. Students who failed in the Caribbean system could obtain an education in the United States, with its tradition of multiple entry points. On their return to the region, having benefited from the educational opportunities offered in the United States, including a wide curriculum, and cosmopolitan setting, such students could secure good paying jobs. The United States thus became a sought after location for higher education pursuits.

As a result, in more recent times, some institutions have begun offering training in the SAT, to facilitate acceptance of students into American institutions of higher education. The American influence is also evident in the tendency for some institutions in

the region to offer transfer credit, and semester courses. This latter was adopted in more recent times by the University of the West Indies (Sherlock & Nettleford, 1990).

The higher education sector in Antigua and Barbuda consisted of a few institutions at different levels of the continuum: the University of the West Indies, and its local component the School of Continuing Education; The Antigua and Barbuda Institute of International Technology (ABIIT); the Antigua and Barbuda School of Continuing Education (ABICE); the Antigua State College (ASC); the University of Health Sciences, and the American University of Antigua and Barbuda College of Medicine; the Antigua and Barbuda Hotel Training Institute (ABHI) and the School of Nursing.

The University of the West Indies and the School of Continuing Education.

The University of the West Indies (UWI) was traditionally Antigua and Barbuda's main institution of higher education. The School of continuing Education, a branch of the University, formerly called the Extra-Mural Department was established in 1967 in Antigua and Barbuda. Antigua and Barbuda had shared these services with the other Leeward Islands since 1948. Edris Bird (as cited in Sherlock & Nettleford, 1990) explains that by 1963 "the governments of the non-campus territories were demanding a stronger physical presence of the University in their territories in view of the tangible gains which the campus territories were deriving from the University"(p.184). As a result, in 1963 the individual Windward and Leeward islands were appointed their own resident tutors. Between 1967 and the early 1970's University Centers were established in seven non-campus territories. Bird (as cited in Roberts, 2006a) indicated that the mandate of the centres was: to prepare students who were unable to attend campuses to work towards examinations which were based on the curricula of the university; to offer non-degree courses in the Liberal

subjects, Citizenship, Caribbean Studies, Creative Arts and Sciences; to promote the extension work of the professional schools of the university, such as Agriculture, Medicine, Education, and Engineering.

The original mandate of the university was to assist the people of the Caribbean, to transition from the colonial experience, to prepare to function independently as sovereign nation states, and to work together as an independent people (Roberts, 2006a; Sherlock & Nettleford, 1990). As time passed the basic objective remained unchanged, but reflecting the progression of time and socio-political realities, the charge came to be focused on preparing the population to successfully negotiate and survive in an era that required a well-trained and educated population. The Center was later connected to the UWI Distance Education Program (UWIdite), allowing students to register for a variety of courses including: the B Sc in Agribusiness and Management, the B Sc in Accounting or Economics, the B Sc in Management Studies, the B Sc in Educational Administration, the Certificate in Gender and Development Studies, the Advanced Diploma in Construction Studies (Roberts, 2006a).

Over the years the School of Continuing Education engaged citizens in many activities and projects. A number of groups received higher education benefits. Working with the University of Mount St. Vincent in Canada, a number of female students received training to the Bachelors and Masters levels in Early Childhood Education. The school offered evening classes to residents seeking credentials to enhance job or promotion opportunities. A Diploma and a Master's degree in Executive Management was particularly well attended by persons from the business sector. In 1977 the Challenge program was implemented, allowing students residing in non-campus countries (NCC) to access programs in the Social Science Faculty with or without the

benefit of lectures (Sherlock & Nettleford, 1990). A Challenge program in first year law was also offered.

In 1984 the UWI Distance Education Experiment (UWIDITE) was instituted to give a measure of support to challenge students. This was followed by the University of the West Indies Distance Education Center (UWIDEC), established to coordinate a number of Bachelors and Masters degree programs offered to various countries in the region, including Antigua and Barbuda. Programs listed included a B Sc in Agribusiness and Management; B Sc in Accounting or Economics; B Sc in Management Studies; B Sc in Educational Administration; Certificate in Gender and Development Studies; and an advanced Diploma in Construction Studies (Roberts, 2006a). The distance learning route allowed students to complete traditional degrees at year one and two levels at the School of Continuing Education. The final year of studies had to be completed in one of the campus territories. This program was also available at the Antigua State College.

ABIIT.

The Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology (ABIIT) was established in 1994 by an Act of Parliament, and was set up with an investment of over 6.2 million dollars (internationalreports 2007). Its stated mission was to foster “academic access, scholarship and excellence as it builds a cadre of human resources with the skills, knowledge and attitudes that are current and relevant for the global job market and for continuing studies.” (para#1). The objective of the Institute was “to diversify the economy of the country and to attract investment in key economic development areas” (Roberts, 2006b, p. 36).

The institution offered seven Associate degree and five diploma programs, as well as individual courses. Many of these were offered in the evening to facilitate attendance by working individuals. Students could read for Associate degrees in the areas of Accounting, Banking and Finance, Business Administration, Computer Programming, Computer Science, Graphic Design, Computer Network Engineering, and Web Mastery. Diplomas could be earned in the areas of Office Specialist General, technology, Web Site Design, and Network Technician. Training was also offered in the area of Computer Repair.

ABIIT entertained articulation agreements with a number of higher education institutions in the United States. These included Skidmore College, Pace University, and Ithaca College. This allowed students who graduated from Associate degree programs at the ABIIT to transfer credits into Bachelors degree programs in those institutions. Students could also read for the Masters of Arts degree in Liberal Arts. Tuition and fees were kept low at less than \$400 per course, and \$75, further facilitating access by low income students.

The Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE).

The Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education was born of a merger between three smaller units, the Golden Opportunity, Youth Skills and Vocational Institute, and was instituted in 2005. The institution comprises three sections: The Division of Industry and Commerce prepares students with a skill set related to an area of craft such as Home Economics, buttressed by commercial skills in areas including business and entrepreneurial studies; the Division of General Education offers a high school diploma program certified by ABICE, and the General Studies component allows students to engage in studies and

remedial education, in preparation for Caribbean Examination Council exams; the Division of Continuing Education allows students to pursue studies in traditional subject areas, such as English and Math, as well exploring issues related to business and community. A number of elective type courses are also available.

Roberts (2006a) stated that plans were afoot for establishing formal articulation arrangements between the ABICE, the ASC and ABIIT. Some level 1 and 2 CSEC courses were being offered at the ABICE, and there plans existed for the introduction of level 3 courses, which would involve Technician training (Roberts, 2006). At the beginning of 2009 these plans were not realized.

The Antigua State College.

Established in 1977 from a merger of three institutions the Antigua State College (ASC) comprises six departments: Advanced Level, Business, Engineering and Construction, Nursing, Pharmacy, Teacher Education, and Undergraduate Studies. Students in the Advanced Level department prepare to sit the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) in a number of subject areas. This department offers Associate Degree Programs in eight areas including: Business Studies; Computer Science; Environmental Science; General Studies; Humanities, Natural Sciences; Mathematics; and Modern Languages. It also prepares students under a franchise arrangement with the UWI to sit the levels 1 and II exams in certain areas. Roberts (2006a) reported that an arrangement exists which allows students to take selected courses at ASC to which two additional years of Hospitality and Tourism Courses can be added at the UWI Hospitality Training Centre in the Bahamas to earn students the bachelor's degree. The College offered UWI Level 2 programs in Social

Sciences as well as in Computer Science, History and Philosophy. A College Diploma for Nurses was offered as well as a Diploma in Pharmacy. Students of Nursing are required to take the Nursing Body's Regional Examination (Roberts, 2006a). The Associate degree in Teacher Education allows candidates upon completion, to read for a Bachelors degree in Education with an additional two years at a UWI campus, or via distance education. (Roberts, 2006a)

The Tertiary Level Institute (TLI) of the UWI is the institution charged with negotiating accreditation arrangements in the region. As a member of this organization the state college offers a number of Associate Degree programs which are recognized for degree transfer credit. These credentials are recognized by Caribbean and British systems. The Undergraduate Studies program is conducted under a franchise arrangement with the UWI, allowing students, upon completion of this program, the option of completing their Bachelor's degrees at a UWI campus. However, within the local system, articulation arrangements are not officially established, allowing the smooth transfer of students within the system.

In some cases also, there absence of articulation mechanisms for programs, or even when mooted, the length of time between planning and implementation, sometimes resulted in a loss of interest by prospective students. Some of these individuals sought other paths to financial survival and self actualization. An example of this would be the mooted plans to articulate the Associate degree in Pharmacy with the Bachelor's degree in Pharmacy at the University of Technology in Jamaica. A plan which has yet to be implemented.

Entry requirements to the ASC required various combinations of CSEC and CAPE subjects. Access to this institution thus proved prohibitive to a large segment of

the population. Only students who were at a given academic level could gain entrance to this institution. There were no arrangements for remedial student scaffolding, or other points of entry allowing the uncertificated entrance.

Student enrollments for the years indicated provided an indication that only a very small percentage of the age range is served through these “normal channels.”

University of Health Sciences.

This private institution was established in 1982, chartered and accredited by the government of Antigua. Its primary function was the preparation of students for the United States Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE). This institution catered primarily to students from the United States. Few Antiguan and Barbudans attended this institution. The potential for incorporating this school into the local higher education sector, for the training of local medical personnel, seems to have not been fully explored.

Table 3

Student Enrollment in Antigua State College – 1998-2003

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total participation</i>
<i>1998-1999</i>	<i>737</i>
<i>1999-2000</i>	<i>868</i>
<i>2000-2001</i>	<i>872</i>
<i>2001-2002</i>	<i>812</i>
<i>2002-2003</i>	<i>841</i>

There were some institutions not offering degree level work. These institutions concentrated on preparing participants with practical work readiness skills. One of these, which was widely acclaimed in the community, was the hotel training institute program. Amalgamation with other public institutions such as the ASC and the ABICE would require a level of reorganization at both ends on issues such as curriculum, cost, credit transfer and accreditation.

The Antigua and Barbuda Hotel Training Institute (ABHI).

The Antigua and Barbuda Hotel Training Institute offered diploma and certificate programs in skills related to the Tourism Industry for persons interested in working in the hotel industry. A modern facility located in pristine surroundings existed for training students in these skills. This facility housed a computer lab, a front office, an administrative building, a library, two kitchens, a conference room, a model hotel room, a laundry, two dining rooms and four lecture rooms (Roberts, 2006). The Core Curriculum was designed by the Caribbean Tourism Organization. Originally courses were offered exclusively on a full time basis, but in the interest of facilitating access, evening programs were scheduled (Roberts, 2006). Tuition costs for this program are higher than those required to attend the State College.

The structure and nature of the higher education system of Antigua and Barbuda spawned in an elitist climate, continued in this tradition of demanding admissions criteria. The modern system, an amalgam of traditional and modern institutions, lacked a strategy of coherence through which movement between institutions could be facilitated. The larger regional system of higher education with which Antigua and Barbuda was affiliated was traditionally dominated by the University of the West Indies (UWI).

Originally associated with the University of London, this institution conferred traditional degrees, awarding Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral level degrees in the humanities, education, the natural and social sciences, engineering, agriculture and law. The higher education system retained many of the characteristics of its parent institution, including the tradition of elitist admissions criteria.

Based on merit, admission to the university required that students demonstrate proficiency in at least five subjects taken during the final years of schooling. There were no options for students who did not acquire admission criteria. School leavers who did not obtain passes in the required number of subjects, and therefore failed to meet the required standards, but wished to pursue higher education had to go abroad, or settle for the tertiary, non-university options offered by other institutions. These and other stipulations led to dissatisfaction with UWI's role in human resource preparation (Sherlock & Nettleford, 1990).

The modern higher education sector in Antigua and Barbuda, viewed together, represents an amalgam of local, regional and international institutions, offering different levels and types of tertiary instruction. The system combining local, regional and international components appears disjointed and incoherent. The challenge for the national government and the institutions of higher education would be to institute articulation and accreditation arrangements, embrace and further develop an inclusive curriculum, forge a coherent "whole" and equitable system from these disparate units, and create a seamless and low cost higher education sector.

Higher Education Financing

Higher education often proves prohibitive for potential students. Unlike some countries, like Cuba, which offers free higher education to citizens, Antigua and Barbuda does not guarantee free higher education. Students who wish to access higher education have to make provisions for the financial aspect of the undertaking.

In many developing countries the financing of higher education is often accepted as the responsibility of the national government. In the English-speaking Caribbean regional governments and the UWI have instituted an 80/20 system. This establishes that regional governments contributing to the UWI are responsible for 80% of the economic cost of educating students, while individual students bear the responsibility of the remaining 20%. The governments of Barbados and Trinidad have elected to pay the full 100% of the economic cost for nationals of their respective countries. In Jamaica the Students' Loan Bureau was established to assist students to pay the remaining costs. However the cost of living expenses as well as the cost of repaying the loan make accessing higher education prohibitive to many potential students.

At the regional level, recognizing the limited nature of government funding as the sole means of funding the sector, and understanding the need to expand access and improve programs, research capabilities and knowledge development, the UWI embarked on funding strategies which has resulted in non-governmental funding accounting for 45% of the university's revenue (Parkins, 2008). Parkins cites further plans to increase the funding base. These included the reorganizing the Business Development Offices to make them more effective and efficient, setting up a University Consultancy Company, instituting alumni contributions, and establishing an endowment fund for the UWI,

implementing a cost recovery strategies through tuition fees and other student financing support arrangements, and accessing private sector funding and securing development finance from international and regional agencies.” (Parkins, 2008).

As in many developing countries, the main source of finance for higher education in Antigua and Barbuda is public funding. In more recent times students’ financial resources have also become a major source of funding for tertiary training. Unlike the developed countries donations, endowments and alumni contributions have not traditionally been a main source of funds, and Caribbean tertiary institutions do not engage to a significant extent in income generating projects. Bourne (2005) points out that, until the 1990s, corporate contributions to higher education were not a tradition in this region. The late Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Eric Williams, stated that anti-capitalist and anti-foreign capital sentiments among academics accounted for the scantiness of corporate contributions until the 1990’s. He went on to predict that the negative repercussions of increasing tax levels as a means of generating revenue for higher education. He predicted the brain drain as people departed the system, as well as the ensuing “fierce” competition between education sub-sectors and other areas of economic activity, fighting for scarce resources (Bourne, 2005).

In the years preceding 1948, in the OECS territories, government sponsored higher education activities were confined to the Leeward Islands Scholarship. This scholarship was awarded to the student who secured the highest score on the scholarship exam. Other students who were fortunate to have affluent family or financial backers also had the option of accessing higher education. During this period tertiary education and church colleges in Antigua were funded by various institutions such as the Moravian church.

In the years preceding 1948 the government had other sources of scholarship funds. International donors such as the Canadian International Development agency (CIDA), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), were well-recognized contributors to the system. Local providers of scholarship funds included philanthropic organizations such as the Mill Reef Club comprising foreign, primarily American, millionaires, residing on the island in a secluded community. In the 2000s higher education was supported by scholarships, awarded philanthropically, or as part of bilateral agreements concluded with various nations. These included countries such as Cuba, China, Mexico and Malaysia. Scholarships were sometimes received by specific ministries, as part of agreements with friendly governments or individuals. Some employers also awarded scholarships as part of training programs for their establishments.

The financing of tuition for higher education in Antigua and Barbuda was thus supported by a number of sources: international donor agencies; the private sector; government loan program; government scholarships; UWI scholarships; individual ministries and philanthropic organizations. The fact that the local component of higher education services fell under the jurisdiction of the national government resulted in a situation where the financing of higher education exerted pressure on the education budget, the lion's share of the education budget being assigned to the earlier sections, in particular the primary section which in 1997 received 45% of the national allocation for education (EFA, 2000).

The growth in the number of higher education candidates in the country was an indication that the sector was beginning to be recognized as essential. This demonstrated

the need for the establishment of national plans to promote the development of the sector, and required the institution of policy to enable the financing of higher education in the country.

The expansion of the higher education sector and the increases in the number of students, resulted in a situation of deficit for the sector. Higher education was included in the general education budget. The money allocated in the state budget for education was insufficient to support all sections of education. Salaries accounted for a large portion of the budget allocation for education, even though salaries for faculty were low. As a result the sector suffered inadequate infrastructure, insufficient technology, under-supplied laboratories and libraries (Interview 26). Inadequate financial contributions to the higher education sector stood in the way of the sector's development and the country's educational progress and economic viability. This could ultimately have repercussions on the sector's ability to adequately provide education efficiently.

Compared to international standards public expenditure on education in Antigua and Barbuda is low. In the late 1990s the average allocation of developed countries to education was 6%. For developing countries the average allocation was 4% (Weifang & Xiaohao, 2005). Antigua and Barbuda average expenditure of 3 % of the GDP on education proved insufficient to service the entire education sector. One technique that proved successful in China, was the increase of the allocation to education by 1% of the budget, per annum, for 5 years. This resulted in a doubling of the allocation to higher education in three years (Weifang & Xiaohao, 2005). The implementation of a similar strategy in Antigua and Barbuda could potentially have the effect of boosting the underfinanced education sector, even at an increase of .5% of the budget.

In 1995 an Education Levy was introduced. Its objectives were to increase the funding to the Education sector. (EFA, 2000). This levy was placed on all basic wages at the rate of 2.5% for anyone making between \$6,500.00 and \$60,000.00, and 5% for anyone earning over \$60,000.00. The revenue raised by the Levy was to be used to defray the cost of transportation, school infrastructure, maintenance and supplies (Board of Education Act, 1994).

In the 1960s and 1970s Antigua and Barbuda's higher education system had been supported by generous scholarship contributions from a number of donor agencies such as CIDA and USAID, as well as local donations of scholarship funds from a variety of business and philanthropic organizations which also assisted the college-going efforts, primarily of school leavers. By the early twenty first century these sources of financing for higher education were drying up. During this earlier period full scholarships were awarded under a bond agreement, requiring recipients to sign bonded agreements to return to work in the country for a period of no less than three years. Approaching the new millennium, the absence of the formerly available means of financial support meant that students who lacked the financial capacity would be unable to attend institutions of higher education.

To offset the effects of this situation the government implemented the National Student Loan Fund, to assist in providing loans to potential students. Under the terms of this arrangement students could borrow a maximum of EC\$ 50,000.00 (less than US \$17,000.00) per annum for educational purposes. This loan carried a 3% interest rate, with various payment options. It was designed to accord special consideration to applicants who lived in single parent households; low-income households which had a

limited number of earners, and a high level of dependency, large households of two adults and three or more children below the age of 18; people who possessed no assets, especially land and or monetary savings, and who demonstrated that they did not otherwise qualify for credit. Also included were applicants whose parents were disabled and or indigent. Applicants who met these criteria, and who had received partial scholarships, could also apply. Decisions regarding the loans to be guaranteed were made by a Student Loan Advisory Committee (National Student Loan Application Form, 2008).

Loan recipients had to agree to work within the state for a period of not less than 2 years. The funding institution was the Antigua and Barbuda Development Bank. Thus by the first decade of the twenty-first century the cost of higher education was being shared, compared to the situation in the latter part of the twentieth century, when scholarships and other forms of financial assistance had been more prevalent. Although the National Student Loan sought to address the issue of equity by targeting the less fortunate, it fell short in two respects. The first is in regard to the reality that inequity does not begin at the college door. To arrest educational inequity much more invasive measures needed to be taken, and at an earlier stage. Secondly, in addressing the situation at the college door, for those disadvantaged students persistent and talented enough to have reached that point, a student loan, in particular a partial loan, would often prove inadequate to meet the needs of those students, who lacked all means of financial support. Student loans often did not cover all the costs, including the unseen costs of a university education.

One reform that would be effective in averting the issue of higher education financing by mitigating the cost for both students and national government, was the elevation of the Antigua State College to full university status. As an autonomous institution, this establishment would have the flexibility to raise funds via the various means available to institutions of this status, including: negotiating research contracts; engaging in technical consultation for the business sector; offering training and educational services and sourcing funds from public and private international organizations and bodies that expressed an interest in promoting educational services.

As an autonomous institution in a small, cash strapped zone, it could also work to conserve and redirect funds through the strategic use of conserving mechanisms. With autonomous status it would have the flexibility to hire, fire, and assign staff outside of the control of the national government. In the imagined scenario of a system of independent higher education institutions, they would have the option of working together to share, assign and relocate staff to optimum advantage. The cost and quality of programs could be managed through a variety of strategies including the reorganization of departments and departmental offerings, and staff and physical resources more efficiently utilized through the elimination of duplicate programs. Student teacher ratios could also be controlled, and classroom, faculty, technology and equipment usage maximized. The concept of economies of scale would thus be applied to the field of higher education, creating a more efficient use of human and physical resources. Weifang and Xiaohao (2005) describe the process of achieving economies of scale through the efficient use of resources.

Some areas which, if addressed, could serve to improve the quality of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda include: the number and types of programs and the expansion of options to include previously excluded areas; the upgrade of the college to university status; the number and development of qualified faculty and staff; the improvement of facilities including library supplies; improved access to and quality of technology; addressing issues of supervision and quality assurance, including accreditation.

Because higher education in the country was primarily centrally regulated, tuition was regulated by the national government. In this arrangement the higher education sector competes with the primary and secondary education sectors for financial resources. Access to financial resources by the higher education sector is curtailed by investments that must be made to the primary and secondary sectors. State support for education is based on the Education Levy as well as budget allocations. This arrangement proved inadequate to support the sector.

Higher education financing in Antigua and Barbuda was affected by both internal and external variables. A declining international economy resulted in a decrease in the financial support previously offered by international organizations. International financing institutions such as the World Bank have adopted new policies of a neo-liberal order, in funding higher education. Internally, increased demand for services has been brought on by the imperatives of globalization. The limited economic resources available to the higher education sector must compete with primary and secondary sectors, especially in developing countries, for the scarce resources allocated to education. This has resulted in poor facilities and education supplies, including limited access to

technology for the higher education sector. These factors impact access to and equity in higher education, as well as the quality of educational services.

Chapter V

FINDINGS

Introduction

The two main objectives of this study were to find out the state of the higher education sector in Antigua and Barbuda, and to determine to what extent general access to higher education, and equitable access specifically were pursued as objectives at official levels. In determining the state of higher education, the study set out to determine who participated in higher education in the country, and to what extent sub-groups were included in the process. The study also sought to establish factors that acted to prohibit progress in the sector. In determining official support and promotion of access and equity the study explored expressions and actions of the national government, and those of the institutions of higher education in the country. The researcher also sought evidence of convergence of policy and action by these two groups.

The research was based on interviews with key personnel, on statistics collected from the various tertiary institutions and government departments, as well as on reports and studies. The results of high stakes tests at the earlier education levels, that impacted participation at the higher education levels, were reviewed. Records of scholarship awards and programs of financial assistance, including student loans, were collected to try to detect tendencies in the financing of higher education in the country. The results of a survey conducted to determine the situation of poverty in the country, were extrapolated to construe a picture of the relationship between participation and socio-economic status. UNESCO and World Bank statistics provided information on the performance of the education sector, as well as other departments of the national government. This allowed

some insight into the overall situation of the country, and acted as an assessment of the performance potential of the sector, relative to other systems in the region and in the developing world, with similar economic and political status. Government documents and information sources were also perused in search of statements of intent and policy, and bills or legislation relating to the development of the higher education sector.

In seeking answers to the two main research questions and their sub-divisions a number of themes and issues emerged. The results of the study are broken into sub-sectors which correspond to the research questions and their sub-components.

Research Question 1- What is the state of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?

Who participates in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?

The issue of socio-economic status and opportunity are important in determining college attendance. Who goes and who doesn't are related to the social and economic status of people in the society. James (2007a) argues that equity and access are considered to be one of the three measures of an effective higher education system.

Along with quality and efficiency, equity is considered an important aspect of national higher education systems. James contends that, generally, an equitable higher education system provides the opportunity for all groups in a society to participate successfully in higher education. Equity is considered to be achieved when the balance of the student population closely reflects the composition of the society as a whole (James, 2007a).

James further makes the point that, in the USA, improving higher education participation by less advantaged groups is considered as a way of helping to integrate them into society, helping to create a more cohesive society. This rationale for improving higher

education also applies in the Caribbean, if to a somewhat lesser degree. More essentially, in the Antigua/Barbuda context, higher education's purpose is to improve skills and marketability at individual and societal levels, and to improve the country's ability to survive socially and economically.

Although internationally there has been an increase in participation in higher education, there is, across the board, a slump in participation by the socio-economically disadvantaged. This group is typically characterized by a combination of qualities: lower levels of educational attainment; lower school completion rates; lower levels of educational aspiration; lower perceptions of the personal and career relevance of higher education; and, in some cases, alienation from the culture of universities (James, 2007a).

In Antigua and Barbuda, rates of participation in higher education are typically much lower than the USA, but are comparatively high for the region. As a relatively recent phenomenon it is still the more socially and economically advantaged who typically send their children to institutions of higher education. Among the middle classes this practice is also becoming the norm. The group most remote from the college going process is the socially and economically disadvantaged group. Quite apart from the obvious limitations of economic disadvantage, attaining higher education requires the aspiration to pursue it. Consequently, those who lack social and cultural capital are at a disadvantage in this regard. James (2007a) points out that in most nations, even in the developed nations with strong egalitarian traditions (such as the United States), that social class is the single most reliable predictor of the participation in higher education at some stage in the life of individuals.

In the context of accessing higher education, low socio-economic status (SES) includes not only economic disadvantage, in monetary terms, but also embraces the absence of social and cultural capital, those social ties and learnt cultural skills that facilitate interaction and in the higher education environment (James, 2007a).

Gaining acceptance to establishments of higher education is therefore not the main criterion of equity in the higher education process. In fact, the concept of equity has far more insidious roots, and permeates into the deep recesses of a student's previous educational experiences and social circumstances. Lack of participation often reflects educational disadvantage that begins in the earlier educational experience, often extending to the socio-economic circumstances of a student's life. It has far-reaching effects, impacting a student's world perspective and perspective of self.

Results of poverty survey showing disparities between regions and communities in Antigua and Barbuda.

The Survey of Living Conditions (Kariri Consultants, 2007) conducted in Antigua and Barbuda cites some areas of the country which were particularly affected by socio-economic deprivation. These included: St. John's City, St. John's Rural, and St. Philip. Overall it was estimated that Antigua and Barbuda's indigence line in 2005/6 was EC\$2,449 (US\$917) per annum or EC\$6.71 (US\$2.51) per day. These represented the "chronically poor" who "lacked the wherewithal to meet the level of expenditure that would be necessary to afford them the minimum nutrition required to maintain good bodily health" (p.xix). Four percent of the population was considered indigent. This estimate was based on households with levels of expenditure at and below EC\$ 6,319

(US\$2,366) per annum. Eighteen percent of the population fell into this category. A third category was the vulnerably poor. This group was not poor, but could fall below the poverty line in the event of a natural or economic disaster. Ten percent of the population was deemed to be in this latter category (Kariri Consultants, 2007).

While, compared to other countries in the Caribbean, this rate of poverty may appear low, it must be remembered that Antigua and Barbuda is a topographically flat country, which relies for its survival on tourism and service sectors. Unlike other countries in the region, this country does not possess reserves of mineral resources. Although agriculture is practiced, limited water supply and land space serve to relegate this sector to a secondary position as an economic earner. The strength of the country thus relies on its best assets: its centrality; its historical links with the international community in terms of the transportation and communication links; its topography, which is able to support and facilitate the development of a strong knowledge (educational) sector; International Communication Technology resources; and industrial enterprises related to the Knowledge-based technology sector.

As significant as the issue of societal levels of poverty, however, are the levels of inequality that exist in the society. Using the Gini coefficient, the SLC estimated that the level of inequality in Antigua and Barbuda was in the vicinity of 0.48, considered high even for a developing nation (Kariri Consultants, 2007, p.38). In this report the point is cogently made that while there is no evidence to substantiate the contention that inequality causes poverty, there seems to be a synergistic relationship between the two conditions. The author argued that societies that accept inequality in effect legitimize poverty, even when there are sufficient resources to eradicate the condition. According to

this line of argument, the acceptance of poverty, “feeds the acceptance of social inequality” (Kariri Consultants, 2007, p.39). In Antigua and Barbuda, the SLC found that the two richest deciles of the country accounted for over 56.3 percent of expenditures, compared to the poorest two deciles which together consumed less than 5%.

Equitable access to education is understandably affected by the distribution of poverty in the country. Equal access cannot exist in a situation of unequal social and economic conditions, particularly where these factors are not taken into account in developing strategies which redress these imbalances.

In establishing poverty indicators, the SLC (Kariri Consultants, 2007) conducted in Antigua and Barbuda found that St. Johns City accounted for 38.6% of poverty, St. Johns Rural 27.3%, St. George, 5.8%, St Phillip 6.3%, St. Paul 8.7%, St. Mary 6.5%, and Barbuda a mere 1% (SLC p. 48). The high levels of poverty identified in St. Johns City and St. Johns Rural mark these regions as those that experience the greatest problems of socio-economic disadvantage. It is clear therefore, that programs need to be designed specifically to redress socio-economic disadvantage in the St. John’s, St. Mary’s and St. Philip’s areas.

While St John’s, the capital city, has the highest levels of poverty, it also boasts the highest level of non-poor. Of all the districts in the country St. Johns appears to have all five quintiles described by the researchers within its parameters. It also reflects the most even distribution of these socio-economic groupings. According to the Survey of Living Conditions (Kariri Consultants, 2007), St. John’s City accounted for 31.8 percent of the total poor population and 54.1 percent of the indigent. St. John’s Rural accounted for 28.2 percent of the total poor, and 24.8 percent of the indigent. Combined these two

districts account for just over 64 percent of the vulnerable poor. It is significant however that this same area, as the center of commerce, trade and industry, accounts for over 50 percent of the total non-poor population.

As the two most populous districts in the country these two districts have between them the largest number of schools per district. While most districts are served by one public high school, and two or three elementary schools, these two districts share between them, at least four high schools. According to one interview participant students are not serviced equally (Interview 23). Some schools tend to be overcrowded and suffer from a lack of facilities, while others are better kept and better serviced. It appears that those schools that service the economically more depressed populations of St. John's and St. John's Rural, receive less attention, are more overcrowded, have less instructional material, are not as well furnished or as well-kept as those that service the more affluent sections of the population.

The neglect apparent in the affected schools results from a combination of factors. As a developing country with limited resources the national government must prioritize in terms of disbursing funds. The combination of poor attitudes, poor parents, poor preparation and poor performance can relegate some schools to secondary position in favor of those schools where students appear to be learning, and where parental influence and considerations of practicality as concerns educational output are present. Thus poorly equipped and overcrowded schools are the lot of the poorer sections of the city. In addition to this, the migration to the area of a large quantity of Spanish speakers, primarily from the Dominican Republic, may have served to place additional stress on these areas. Performance on high stakes tests, the Common Entrance (CEE), the Post

Primary (PPE) and the Caribbean Council (CXC) Exams has been adversely affected, as has the physical capacity of schools, by this influx of migrants, who tend to gravitate to the poorer sections of the city.

A comparison of the Top Hundred Students for the 2005 Common Entrance Exam, the test taken by students at the end of primary school for admission to secondary school, will suffice to demonstrate that the public elementary schools in the St. John's area, are performing below par. In 2005 1,591 students took the Common Entrance Exam. 1,010 or 63% attended the public schools, and 580 or 36% were private school students. Of a total of 1,591 students taking the Common Entrance Exam in 2005, only 20 students, one percent of the total population attended public school. This amounted to only two percent of public school students. This attests to the weakness of the public elementary school system. Of these schools, the two located in the St. John's City area, the Mary E. Piggott, and the TN Kirnon schools had one student and two students respectively, figuring among the one hundred. Only three schools in the St. John's rural area figured in this number (Common Entrance passes, 2005).

This observation corresponds to the findings of George's (2008a) a report on Student Performance in the 2008 Common Entrance Examinations. In this study George found statistically significant differences between government and private schools, and a strong association between success in examinations and school-type. This report also supports observations in the present study associating low social and economic status (SES) with educational disadvantage.

the results of this year's CEE also appear to corroborate findings of the country poverty report in terms of the geographical location of the poor in Antigua and

Barbuda. As shown in figure 3 (a boxplot comparing the distribution of marks on the CEE) in the government and private schools over zonal area), schools in zone 1 are the worst performing schools in the CEE, and the country report showed the St.

John's City to be the location of some of the poorest communities in Antigua and Barbuda, a result which would correspond to the location and catchment area of a number of schools in zone 1. It should also be noted that schools in these areas also have the highest population density of students (George, 2008a).

The criteria used for admission of students to secondary school should be equitable. Traditionally the Antigua Girls High School catered to the rich. Admission to certain classes of students was prohibited. In fact, one school, the T.O.R. Memorial School, founded by Miss Nellie Robinson, is hailed as being the first to make secondary education accessible to children born out of wedlock. In a newspaper article, Tim Hector (1999) acclaims Miss Robinson as one of the two most important Antiguan or Barbudans of this century. At that time more than 75 percent of children were born out of wedlock in Antigua and Barbuda. By allowing admission to children born out of wedlock Miss Robinson challenged the colonial cultural system that existed, forcing the two leading schools, the Antigua Grammar School for boys, and the Antigua Girls High School, to follow suit (Hector, 1999).

The economic poverty of St. John's, mirrored in the educational output of students, as evidenced by their performance on the high stakes tests of the country, is distressing and alarming. A dire loss of human capital accompanies the outcomes of this test and its sister test, the Post Primary/ Junior Secondary exam.

The Common Entrance and Post Primary Examinations.

The relationship between the poverty prevalent in the St. John's City and St John's Rural areas, and the mirror effect on the academic performance of students who attend school in these areas was previously discussed. We will now look at how the results of these tests lead to wasted human potential, and have done so continuously since the institution of these tests. Some explanation is necessary.

The Common Entrance exam taken by almost all students who attend the public school system of Antigua and Barbuda, tests students' knowledge and skills at the end of their elementary school career. This test determines a student's ability to continue his /her education in the secondary section, and their ability to perform effectively at high school levels. Students who fail are allowed to retake this exam each year, until their thirteenth birthday.

Students 13 years of age and older, who fail this test, are not eligible to attend any of the public secondary institutions. To continue their educational career in the public school system, students who fail the Common Entrance Examination, after their 13th birthday, or whose 13th birthday occurs before the administration of the CEE the following year, must attend the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades in a Junior Secondary School. Students then take the Post Primary Examination in the ninth grade. Upon successful completion these students are usually accepted into the third form at a secondary institution, and begin preparation for the high school outgoing examinations. Students who fail a second time are not allowed to continue on, but can opt for skills training. Their public sponsored academic career is effectively terminated at this point.

Tables 4, 5, 6, and 7 present data on the performance of students on the Common Entrance and Post primary exams for the period 2000-2008.. Table 4 shows the results of the Common Entrance Exam for the period 2000-2008. It presents the numbers of students who sat the test each year for this period, and the numbers and percentages of students that passed. The table shows that, each year, the number of girls who took the test exceeded that of boys, except in 2005 when there were slightly more boys than girl. The table shows that for each year a higher number of girls passed the test than boys. In total for this period, less than 70% of students passed the test each year, revealing that, on average, 3 out of every 10 students fail the Common Entrance Exam.

Table4

PRIMARY/ COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION RESULTS 2000-2008

<i>Sex</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>
<i>M</i>	645	692	729	737	734	797	806	854	877
<i>F</i>	734	736	813	760	832	794	784	885	878
<i>T</i>	1379	1428	1542	1497	1566	1591	1590	1739	1755
<i>Passes</i>									
<i>M</i>	381	364	372	414	448	421	426	466	539
<i>F</i>	528	511	601	526	608	553	534	643	680
<i>T</i>	909	875	973	940	1056	974	960	1109	1219
<i>% Passes</i>									
<i>M</i>	59.1	52.6	51.0	56.2	61	52.8	52.9	54.5	61.5
<i>F</i>	71.9	69.4	73.9	69.2	73.1	69.6	68.1	72.6	77.4
<i>T</i>	65.9	61.3	63.1	62.8	67.4	61.2	60.4	63.8	69.5

Source: Ministry of Education: Measurement and Evaluation Unit (Antigua and Barbuda)(2008)

Table 5 reveals the following trends in failure rates over the period 2000-2008. In 2000, 34.1 percent of students who sat the Common Entrance Exam, failed. In 2001 a decrease in performance of over four percent brought this figure to 38.7. In 2002, a minimal improvement in performance reduced the failure rate to 36.9. In 2003 a slight drop in performance resulted in an increase of less than one percent to 37.2. In 2004 an improvement of almost five percent brought the failure rate to 32.6. A slump in performance in 2005 raised the failure rate to 39.8, almost forty percent. In 2006 performance remained low with a failure rate of 39.6. There was a slight improvement in student performance in 2007, reducing the failure rate of students on this test to 36.2 percent. In 2008 the rate improved, and failure on the test was estimated at around 30.5 percent.

Table 5

FAILURE RATES ON COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMS 2000-2008

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
34.1%	38.7%	36.9%	37.2%	32.6%	39.8%	39.6%	36.2%	30.5%

(extrapolated from Ministry of Education data)

These trends have implications for the achievement of the goal of universal secondary education, and for the capacity of students to develop a desire for, and effectively pursue, programs of higher education. Having failed this test the students in

this group are eligible, with a small adjustment in number for those students younger than 13 years, to sit the Post Primary Exam in 3 years.

Table 6 shows the numbers and gender of students who took the Post-Primary/ Junior Secondary Examination for the years 2000-2008. The figures also reveal a high rate of failure on this test. This is especially of concern when the fact that this test determines students' ability to continue their academic career is taken into consideration. These tests would be more effectively used to identify students in need of remediation, which is a recommendation of this study.

Table 6

POST PRIMARY/ JUNIOR SECONDARY EXAMINATION RESULTS 2000-2008

<i>Sex</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>
<i>M</i>	224	258	317	290	282	283	248	212	193
<i>F</i>	208	236	232	226	214	207	198	171	163
<i>T</i>	432	494	549	516	496	490	446	383	356
<i>Passes</i>									
<i>M</i>	106	139	104	87	99	93	146	101	101
<i>F</i>	115	150	117	71	97	107	149	96	119
<i>T</i>	221	289	221	158	196	200	295	197	22
<i>% Passes</i>									
<i>M</i>	47.3	53.9	32.8	30.0	35.1	32.9	58.9	47.6	52.3
<i>F</i>	55.3	63.6	50.4	31.4	45.3	51.7	75.3	56.1	73.0
<i>T</i>	51.2	58.5	40.3	30.6	39.5	40.8	66.1	51.4	61.8

Source: Ministry of Education: Measurement and Evaluation Unit (Antigua and Barbuda)(2008)

Table 6 shows that more boys than girls took this test each year over the specified period. This is logical given the fact that more boys fail the Common Entrance Exam than girls. Girls had a higher rate of passes on this test than boys, except in 2003 and 2004 when the percentage of boys passing the test was higher than girls. Over the period 2000-2008, 48.9% of students who took the Post primary Exam were successful. This observation is supported by George (2009) who arrived at a similar conclusion. In a Social Risk Assessment of the Education System in Antigua and Barbuda, George found that “The pass rates in these exams (though) have tended to be less than 50% of students, with the rate higher amongst girls than boys” (2008a).

It is difficult to determine the precise cause of the high rates of failure on this test. Given the paucity of data, and statistics, and an apparent apathy towards accumulating information that could be used to inform policy, it is difficult to make a determination as to specific weaknesses, with a view to remediation.

Table 7 shows the rates of failure on the Post Primary examinations for the years 2000-2008. These figures show an average failure rate of over 47% for the period 2000-2008. There was a decided slump in student performance for the years 2002-2005. The average rate of failure for these years exceeded 60%.

Table 7

FAILURE RATES ON POST PRIMARY EXAMS 2000-2008

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
48.8%	41.5%	59.7%	69.4%	60.5%	59.2%	33.9%	48.6%	39.2%

(extrapolated from Ministry of Education data)

On average 3 out of 10 students fail the Common Entrance annually, and one-half of the students who take the Post Primary Exam, fail. Given the fact that success on these exams determine students' ability to pursue secondary education, and that failure prevents any further excursion into academic territory, the effect of failure on these tests possibly amounts to an appalling trend in wasted human potential. Even given the alternative routes to higher education that now constitute a part of the Caribbean educational spectrum, the effect of the early failures, and the interruption of educational services can serve at best to stymie students' motivation to pursue further education, and at worst to prevent them from being academically equipped to pursue further studies.

The high school exit exams are designed and administered by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). Some students also take the General Certificate Examinations administered by Cambridge, or the University of London Exams, administered by London University. These British tests were used before the CXC tests were introduced. Success in a given number of subjects satisfies admission requirements to the University of the West Indies and British universities.

The examinations consist of the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) tests, and the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE). The CSEC tests are taken at the end of the secondary education cycle. The CAPE tests are post-secondary in nature and represent advanced studies in the various subject areas. Passes in five or six CSEC subjects is accepted at the UWI and Britain for admission to university. Throughout the Caribbean region the percentage of students successful in 5 or more CSEC subjects ranges on average between 50 and 70 percent. Statistics for Antigua and Barbuda for the year 2000 show that of 518 students sitting the exam, 442 sat 5 or more

exams. Of this number 280, or 63.3 percent of students were successful that year in 5 or more subjects (Howe, 2005).

In 1995 19% of students who took the CAPE test passed in at least two subjects. In 2000 approximately 16% were successful. These pass rates were low when compared to other islands in the region. For the Campus territories, on average 53% of students were successful in 1995, and in 2000, 49%. For the non-campus territories the average rate of passes were 38% and 33% for the same time period.

In Table 8, data compiled by the Ministry of Education of Antigua and Barbuda show the numbers of CSEC subjects passed by students in various schools for 2007. This table indicates that of the 1663 students taking the test that year 594 or roughly 64 % students passed five or more subjects, and were eligible for admission to institutions of higher education. Some students may have been returning students seeking additional credentials, a fact that would result in a higher rate of eligible students.

Given the high rates of failure on the Common Entrance and Post Primary Examinations, the average pass rates on the CSEC, and low pass rates on the CAPE tests, the prospects of enhancing access and developing a vibrant higher education sector represent a challenge. The modest percentage of students who qualify for higher education programs that are academically oriented make prospects for equitable access to higher education a greater challenge. Interventions at the upper level are understandably not as effective as those that occur earlier in a student's educational career, and support only the moderate number of individuals who make it through the education system.

Table 8

		<i>Ministry of Education record of CXC Examination Passes, 2008</i> <i>Number of Students Passing a Particular Number of Subjects</i>														
	<i>School</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	
1	<i>ABICE</i>	33	28	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	69
2	<i>All Saints Secondary</i>	2	4	10	17	17	24	17	7	2	1	0	0	0	0	101
3	<i>Antigua Girls High</i>	1	0	0	2	2	13	23	23	39	17	2	0	0	0	122
4	<i>Antigua Grammar</i>	0	0	3	6	15	18	17	10	9	6	0	0	0	0	84
5	<i>Antigua Private</i>	127	144	39	8	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	326
6	<i>Baptist Academy</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	4
7	<i>Belmont School of Business</i>	22	21	10	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55
8	<i>Christ The King High</i>	1	1	2	0	1	5	6	7	8	14	1	1	0	0	47
9	<i>Christian Faith Academy</i>	10	4	14	2	4	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	42
10	<i>Clare Hall Secondary</i>	0	4	2	13	15	16	12	9	4	0	0	0	0	0	75
11	<i>Collins Centre for Academic Excellence</i>	39	48	6	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	96
12	<i>Holy Trinity Private</i>	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
13	<i>Island Academy</i>	0	3	0	0	1	6	4	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	22
14	<i>Jennings Secondary</i>	11	21	17	11	13	3	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	82
15	<i>Learning Centre</i>	62	76	13	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	156
16	<i>Ottos Comprehensive</i>	0	6	6	16	26	24	25	7	6	0	0	0	0	0	116
17	<i>Pares Secondary</i>	1	2	3	2	4	2	11	6	6	3	0	0	0	0	40
18	<i>Princess Margaret</i>	2	3	7	18	26	25	20	12	8	4	1	0	0	0	126
19	<i>Seventh-Day Adventist</i>	0	0	3	1	2	8	9	4	5	3	3	0	0	0	38
20	<i>Sir McChesney George</i>	0	0	2	2	0	4	3	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	16
21	<i>St. Joseph Academy</i>	0	7	0	2	1	5	7	8	7	0	1	3	2	1	44
	<i>Totals</i>	313	372	143	108	133	161	163	106	97	48	12	4	2	1	1663

It therefore follows that adults who enroll in higher education programs to further their education ,or to advance skills, and those students who have persevered to acquire requirements for admission to institutions of higher education, together, these two groups do not begin to equate the number of students lost due to failure in their earlier schooling years.

Given the relatively low rate of poverty in Antigua and Barbuda, the low level of participation in higher education may not be fully explained by socio-economic disadvantage. This leads us to consider the factor of cultural reproduction, and the situation of absence of social and cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977).

Bourdieu uses the theory of cultural reproduction to explain the phenomenon of unequal educational achievement. According to Bourdieu (as cited in O'Brien & O'Fathaigh, 2004), the educational experience of an individual is largely connected to his/ her social and material history. Bourdieu (as cited in O'Brien & O'Fathaigh, 2004) explains how cultural barriers to achievement effectively exclude the disadvantaged from participating in the educational process. He argues that children of the dominant culture have more access to activities that result in superior academic performance, and that school culture is more closely related to that of the dominant culture. (cited in Macleod, 1987). Conversely, poor students often develop negative predispositions towards school and experience failure and exclusion (cited in Karabel & Halsey, 1977)

Bourdieu coins the terms "habitus", "capitals" and "fields" to develop his theory of how some students are excluded from the successful pursuit of educational objectives. He defines habitus as unconscious dispositions shaped by one's outlook, and the values derived from one's outlook (Bourdieu, 1977 b). He points out that an individual's social

class is a strong determinant of his thoughts, action, and lifestyle patterns. People of higher class groupings are more likely to gravitate towards schooling, since this represents affluence and the lifestyle to which they are accustomed.

For Bourdieu there are three types of capital: economic, social, and cultural. Economic capital refers to liquid cash. People who possess this are the wealthy who are able to purchase their way to success. Bourdieu sees social capital as those relationships which an individual may form which are able to spur him on. Similar to the concept of 'networking', these social connections can be transferred into economic capital when the individual, through those connections, is able to achieve economic success. Cultural capital may be objectified, embodied or institutionalized. The first may manifest itself in books, computers, qualifications; the second is connected to the level of education and educational qualities acquired by an individual such as accent and academic dispositions; and the third refers to the types of schools, colleges and institutions one has attended.

The third concept identified by Bourdieu (as cited in O'Brien & O'Fathaigh, 2004) is that of "fields". This refers to a system of network relationships that impact and help to form the habitus of individuals. Education is an example of such a field. These systems of relationships have sets of rules which regulate the behaviour of participants (O'Brien & O'Fathaigh, 2004). Theoretically, as individuals enter these fields they jostle and vie for position. Those having prior experience of credentials in the system are advantageously situated, and perceived as having greater capital. O'Brien and O'Fathaigh (2004) point out that these are meaningful only if accepted by all parties concerned.

O'Brien and O'Fathaigh (2007) make the important point that strategies for creating a socially inclusive education system could benefit from adopting a Bourdieuan

perspective. Bourdieu's concept of habitus (as cited in O'Brien & O'Fathaigh, 2004) alerts us to the insidious nature of the values and perspectives that prevent disadvantaged youth from choosing to participate in higher education. The concept of capital helps us to understand that simply placing such students into an educational environment, according them access, is insufficient to create the rounded citizen. Rather it alerts us to the fact that a greater input is required from institutional sources to alleviate the imbalance of disadvantage. The concept of fields helps us to envisage the dynamic quality of institutions, and realize that the processes of interaction that occur therein must be mitigated to ensure navigation of the system by the disadvantaged.

Bourdieu's theory is relevant in its translation to the Antiguan and Barbudan context in helping to explain a seeming disinclination towards the pursuit of higher education evidenced by segments of various communities throughout the state. Socio-economic disadvantage acts to deprive individuals of their right to education. In some communities in Antigua and Barbuda social reproduction might play a part, alongside socio-economic or socio-cultural/ educational disadvantage, in creating a lack of motivation to access higher education.

Are sub-groups equally represented in higher education?

In Antigua and Barbuda there are a number of groups in the population not traditionally reflected in the higher education sector. These include individuals living in Barbuda, rural areas, of low socio-economic status, and with disabilities, older people and males. For the purpose of this dissertation, these groups are the ones that are of immediate interest with respect to their access to tertiary institutions.

Barbudans.

Under the Barbuda Local Government Act (1976) the administration of the affairs of the island of Barbuda are conducted by a locally elected Council. The Council assists in sourcing scholarships, and providing tertiary education opportunities specifically for Barbudans.

Distance from the mainland, Antigua, is consistently a prohibiting factor to the pursuit of higher education in Barbuda. It has long been a contention of the Barbudans that the limited funds and facilities of the twin island state are often not shared with them in an equitable manner. Barbudans traditionally have to make the sacrifice of traveling, and finding lodgings with family, friends or others, in order to access secondary educational services. During the 1970s the situation began to improve, and Barbudans were able to complete secondary education in Barbuda.

The situation of tertiary education services is not as convenient. In order to participate in tertiary education, Barbudans must travel to Antigua for the services that exist there, or further afield, generally to the United States, England or Canada.

Compounded by the separation by water, the sister island of Barbuda often suffers from neglect by the elected officials of the central government of the twin island state. In terms of scholarship awards, according to *Statistics of the Scholarships and Awards (1995-2008)*, a report produced by the Board of Education, in the 13 year period 1995-2008, of a total one thousand, nine hundred and seventy three scholarship awards, Barbudans received only 14, an average of approximately one scholarship per year. This average falls far below the OECS average of 58 higher education students per 10,000 of the population, a low average by all standards. The population of Barbuda comprises

approximately 1,500 people. The size of this population warrants at the very least five scholarships per annum.

People that inhabit rural areas.

Up to the late 1970s, Antigua and Barbuda's Advanced Placement (A level) system, the Sixth Form, had its sole component in St. John's. The Sixth Form classes were held at three of the main Secondary schools in the capital: The Antigua Grammar School, The Antigua Girls High School, and the Princess Margaret School. Thus, students who lived in rural areas were less represented at this level of schooling than students who lived and attended schools in St. John's, the capital city. The centralization of these advanced educational opportunities thus contributed to a situation in which the majority of students being chosen for scholarships, and receiving higher education services, were from the capital city. The unavailability of A Level classes in the rural areas, while not representing an insurmountable barrier, represented enough of a deterrent to students who inhabited rural areas. Participation in the A' level classes were most frequently engaged in by persons attending the three schools mentioned, all located in the capital city, St. John's.

The removal of the A Level section from the secondary school system, and the transfer of this program to the Antigua State College, served to make it more available to the entire community of Antigua. Again the geographical distance from Barbuda required the relocation of students from this island. The unavailability of advanced educational services to rural dwellers, acted to discourage, and indeed prohibit access to higher education for individuals residing in rural areas, whose financial status did not allow

them to relocate or travel.

Although the establishment of the Antigua State College served to centralize advanced level study in Antigua and Barbuda, it did not fully address the issue of availability to the entire nation. This latter still represents an issue affecting participation at this level, and its impact on subsequent participation in higher education.

People of low socio-economic status.

The poverty survey conducted in Antigua and Barbuda (Kariri Consultants, 2007) identified by district the level of poverty of each of eight communities in Antigua and Barbuda. The study found that the district including St. John's, the capital city, had the highest degree of indigence (54%), and poverty (32.8%). St. John's rural, an adjoining district, also suffered from high levels of indigence and poverty (24.8 and 28.2 respectively). The percentage of people qualifying as the vulnerable poor were estimated to be 33.5% and 30.6% for these two communities respectively. St. Paul's had the next highest level of poverty, followed by St. Philip and St. Peter.

It is interesting to note that while Barbuda is geographically separated from Antigua, and thus is remotely separated from services and the central economy, that the lowest poverty index (10.5%) was that of the sister island, Barbuda (Kariri Consultants, 2007). Poverty, therefore, does not constitute an inhibiting factor to the attainment of higher education for the people of Barbuda. In the case of Antigua, the high incidence of poverty indubitably represents a factor contributing to inequitable access, persistence and success in the higher educational trajectory of people affected in parts of this island. This is particularly so in areas of St. John's.

Individuals with disabilities

Individuals with disabilities have long been excluded from the higher education sector in the Caribbean. Howe (2005) reports that no clear guidelines have been developed in the region regarding the treatment of the disabled. UWI has made an effort to make its buildings structurally accessible for the disabled. The Mona campus has seen a diminishing in the numbers of disabled students. This decline is reported between 1998-99 and 2000-2001 when the number of students attending the Mona campus of the University of the West Indies went from 39-31 (Howe, 2005).

In Antigua and Barbuda disabled students are categorized as the severely mentally disabled, the blind, the mute and the deaf. Traditionally, in Antigua and Barbuda, these students have been schooled at institutions that cater specifically to their needs as a group. Usually these students are not incorporated into the mainstream, and rarely engage in the pursuit of higher education.

Although some disabled individuals in Antigua and Barbuda do access higher education, it seems that records do not exist specifying the numbers of disabled individuals that have accessed higher education, nor the policy used to target this group for access to tertiary education.

Older people.

Traditionally in the English speaking Caribbean, the pursuit of higher education has been considered an activity reserved for school leavers, upon immediate completion of secondary schooling. Usually these are the graduates of the A (advanced) level class who had already earned basic university entrance requirements two years earlier, with the

completion of the O (ordinary) level phase of their educational career, but decided to pursue Advanced level studies. The inconvenience of overseas travel, the limited opportunities that existed on the island, the prohibitive academic requirements, as well as work and home making responsibilities, combined to discourage the pursuit of tertiary education by adults in the society, many of whom were shut out of the early matriculation process at the secondary school level.

As a measure established to encourage the participation of mature adults in higher education, the UWI created a regulation allowing “Mature Students,” students over the age of 21, more flexible admissions requirements. Indeed, the Strategic Plan of 2002 (as cited in Howe, 2005) states that a substantial proportion of new applicants are in the mid-twenties and early thirties. These represent members of the working population seeking to upgrade their skills and qualifications. Some of these applicants opt for the distance education programs of the university.

In Antigua and Barbuda the opening of distance education courses, such as those offered by the UWI, and the other opportunities for higher education that have become available within the last two decades, have resulted in increased enrollment in higher education. Although participation in these programs is on the increase, the figures available still classify this group as having unequal representation, and thus access, to tertiary education. Distance education and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) assisted education is still in its infancy in the Caribbean, and the participation of adults in these programs in Antigua and Barbuda is modest. According to one official in Antigua and Barbuda’s UWI continuing education program, (recently renamed the “University of the West Indies Open Campus”), “The distance education degree program

in the country is small. Over the past five years, enrollment fluctuated between 170-184 students. This number is not substantial” (Interview 32). There is also a face-to face associate degree program in public sector management skills which has an enrollment of 45, a small number by any standard. The rationale proffered by this official for the limited enrollment figures was “they find the cost (of tuition) high” (Interview# 32). The present cost of tuition of (Eastern Caribbean) EC \$650.00 (US \$240.00) is due to increase to EC \$810.00 later in 2009 (Interview 32).

The Mature Student program also faces difficulties that affect levels of participation in this program. Howe (2005) suggests that mature adults are more discriminating about teaching and learning quality, and may be more stressed by family and other commitments. This factor may account to some extent for the low enrollment in these programs.

The literature on participation of adults in education sheds some light on the issue of adult education. Sargant (1997) recounts the findings of a survey conducted by the Department for Education and Employment in the United Kingdom (UK) in 1996. Conducted on adults aged 17 years and older, this UK study found that: 41% of women, as compared to 31% of men, reported undertaking no learning since leaving full-time education. Social class was found to be a key determinant of participation in learning: over one half of respondents, who were of upper or middle class background, were current or recent learners, as compared to one-third of the skilled working class. The length of initial education was found to be the best predictor of participation in adult learning: Only 20% of people leaving full-time education before the age of 16 were current or recent learners; 39% of individuals in the study who had left formal education

at 16 or 17 and 59% of those who left at or after turning 18, were current or recent learners. Where people lived was found to have a major impact on whether they are likely to participate in higher education (Sargant, 1997).

Males.

There is, as has been recorded internationally, a gender imbalance in student population at the University of the West Indies. In the academic year 2000-2001 females almost doubled males in registration rates. While there was a total registration of 15, 950 females, male registration totaled 7, 978. Males, however, predominated in the Departments of Science and Technology and Engineering. Females had larger enrolments in the departments of Arts and Humanities, Law, Social Sciences, and Education (Howe, 2005).

In Antigua and Barbuda, registration for the period 2005-2008 in the undergraduate department of the Antigua State College serves to illustrate the gender imbalance in participation in higher education.

Table 9 shows student enrollment by department and gender for the academic years 2005-2008 at the Antigua State College. Students attend the college for a 2 year period and may enroll in one of a number of programs. The program from which Table 9 derives is a franchise program of the UWI. This program allows students who meet the matriculation requirements of the university to enroll in university sponsored programs. They complete the assignments and examinations set by the university, but are supervised and taught by local tutors, sanctioned by UWI. For the final year of the program, students must complete residence at one of the main campuses.

Table 9 shows three programs offered by the UWI division of the Antigua State College: Humanities and Education, Pure and Applied Sciences, and Social Sciences. The number by gender of students enrolled in these three departments are shown on the chart. In each of these years attendance by females more than doubled that of males.

Table 9 further shows that in 2005-2006 males accounted for 11.9 % of student enrollment in the Year 1 component while 88.1 % were females. In the Year 2 component 25% were male and 75% were female. In the 2006-2007 academic year 18.5% of the Year 1 component were male, and 81.4% female. Of the Year 2 group of students 15.6% were males and 84.4% were females. In 2007- 2008 males 31.8% of Year 1 students were males and 68.2 were females. Of the Year 2 component 20.8% were males, while females accounted for 79.1% of all enrolled students.

Table 9 suggests two trends among males: a diminishing in the number of males in higher education, and a movement away from science as a career choice. The table however shows a consistency in the pattern of male enrollment, followed by an increase. By contrast the enrollment of females lost a total of 10 students and almost four percent of total enrollment between the 2005-2006 and the 2006-2007 years. If this indicates a general trend, the causes should be investigated and identified. It is clear from this table that male enrollment at this level is low.

In reviewing factors that lead to educational failure, George (2009) found that the educational system and structures act to perpetuate and reinforce the social and economic differences that exist between students. She also found home background to be very much associated with educational achievement, and attributed the greatest difference to SES factors. She determined that gender plays a role in educational failure in Antigua and

Table 9

Antigua State College: Student Enrollment by Department, Year and Gender 2005-2008

2005-2006

	<u>YEAR1</u>			<u>YEAR2</u>
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<i>Humanities</i>				
<i>& Education</i>	0	2	0	0
<i>Pure and Applied</i>	0	3	0	2
<i>Sciences</i>				
<i>Social Sciences</i>	<u>5</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>13</u>
<i>Total:</i>	5	37	5	15

2006-2007

	<u>YEAR 1</u>			<u>YEAR2</u>
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<i>Humanities</i>				
<i>& Education</i>	0	3	0	0
<i>Pure and Applied</i>	1	2	0	3
<i>Sciences</i>				
<i>Social Sciences</i>	<u>4</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>24</u>
<i>Total:</i>	5	22	5	27

2007-2008

	<u>YEAR1</u>			<u>YEAR2</u>
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<i>Humanities</i>				
<i>& Education</i>	0	4	0	0
<i>Pure and Applied</i>	4	2	1	2
<i>Sciences</i>				
<i>Social Sciences</i>	<u>10</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>17</u>
<i>Total:</i>	14	30	5	19

Source: Antigua State College

Barbuda, and is, in fact, highly associated with educational achievement (George, 2009). Roberts (2006a) remarked the consistent decrease in males in tertiary education in the Caribbean. She noted that at the Antigua State College, with the exception of the Technical and Engineering department, females were preponderant. Roberts observed that in the academic years 1986-87 and 1999-2000 a significant increase of women enrolling in the University of the West Indies Distance Education Experiment (UWIDITE) was accompanied by an alarming decrease in the amount of males who registered for this program.

The Spanish-Speaking Population

A more recent addition to the Antiguan and Barbudan social environment is a large group of Spanish speakers who entered the country as immigrants from the Dominican Republic (Farquhar, 2004). This group are said to be descendents of Antiguan who in the late 19th and early 20th century, emigrated to the Dominican Republic in search of employment (Farquhar, 2004). It is estimated that in 2002 there was a minimum of 1,201 Spanish speakers living in Antigua. This was estimated from the review of a table of Work Permits issued to Spanish speakers from the Dominican Republic for the years 1997-2002, exclusive of 1999 for which no figures were provided (Farquhar, 2004). This group constituted the fourth largest group of immigrants to the country, after, Guyanese, Jamaicans and Dominicans from the island of Dominica. Based on word of mouth reporting, Johnson (as cited in Farquhar, 2004) estimated the number of Spanish speakers from the Dominican Republic, living in Antigua and Barbuda at 3,000-10,000 individuals. Farquhar (2004) points out that the discrepancy between the

unofficial figures and those provided by the government source may be explained by the presence in the immigrant community of individuals who “may prefer their status to be unknown to the authorities”(P.3).

According to interview participants (Interviews 29,30,33), as well as from personal observation there appears to be a Spanish-speaking community of significant proportions living in Antigua. This is supported by the fact that some newspapers frequently translate articles to Spanish. There are Spanish football teams on the island. There are stores and bars run by Spanish speakers. Farquar (2004) reports that the National Office of Disaster Services has recorded several messages in Spanish to alert this population in the event of a hurricane. This is an indication that the Spanish speaking population is being taken into account at official levels. Farquhar further notes that in the Primary Education sector a (foreign) language policy is evolving in which Spanish as a second language is offered to the offspring of Spanish immigrants (Farquhar, 2004). Whether this occurrence is planned or simply evolving is not in issue here. Of importance to this study is that fact that there seems to be some recognition at official levels of the presence of this language group.

The impact of this group of new Spanish speaking citizens on the school system is yet unknown. The evidence of the group's influence on the mass media and in the community at large may give some indication of the size of the group. Farquhar (2000) notes that speakers of a mix of French Creole and English, from the island of Dominica, have long been a group constantly migrating to Antigua, but that, by comparison, their influence has been less felt than that of the newly arriving Spanish speaking population. This indicates the influence and size of the group of new Spanish speaking immigrants

now resident on the island. A concomitant factor, which is important to the education system, is the social and economic status of this population. It is apparent that this group, like many immigrant groups, occupy the lower echelons of the social stratum. Johnson (as cited in Farquhar, 2004) reports that "In Antigua and Barbuda they generally obtain low paying jobs and some of the women seek employment in the sex trade..." (p.4).

The group is growing. One official shared the information that "they keep sending for family, relatives and friends. In five or six years the numbers will increase. The whole population will be very much mixed" (Interview 29). A large section of primarily Spanish speaking students could create the issue of language acting as a barrier to learning. Students in such situations often experience difficulty functioning in a second language. In some countries, such as the United States, efforts are made to accommodate students new to the country who have different language backgrounds. Bilingual education and English as a Second Language services are available to students fitting this description.

One official responsible for testing expressed a concern that "they have a problem with English. We need to have Spanish speaking teachers to teach these (Spanish speaking) children. There is a large population of Spanish speakers (adults) in the community at large. They have shops and so on. There should be more Spanish speaking children in the schools. A lot of them probably drop out before they reach secondary school" (Interview 34).

All education professionals are not in agreement in relation to this topic. In fact, one official previously interviewed, after discussing the situation of the Spanish speaking population in the schools with 13 teachers in the system, returned the information that "there are only a few (Spanish speaking children) in each class" (Interview 29).

These students seem to live and attend schools predominantly in the less affluent communities identified in the poverty survey as suffering the greatest disadvantage. In identifying the schools which had the greatest number of Spanish speaking students the official had this to say “A lot of Spanish Students wouldn’t pass to go to Grammar School and High School, so they would be in other schools: Princess Margaret more than Grammar School and High School; Grays Farm, Green Bay, Nut Grove, Clare Hall, Jennings, Ottos and All Saints” (Interview 29). The Grammar and High Schools are regarded as the two top public high schools in the country. Grays Farm, Green Bay, and Nut Grove are some of the most financially “challenged” schools in the nation.

These statements highlight the fact that this population of students is not performing as well academically as some other groups. This may be due to a variety of factors including the language barrier, compounded by the social and economic situation. In terms of estimating the size of the population of Spanish speaking students in the school system this official estimated that “possibly five to eight percent of the primary and secondary school population are Spanish, and in the wider population 15 to 20%” (Interview 29).

In response to the question of how this interview participant thought the Spanish speaking Elementary students generally perform on the Common Entrance Exam, this official responded “Some would do well. I don’t think most would do well. You may find one or two who excel. I think some are struggling” (Interview 29).

Some officials expressed the opinion that the Spanish speaking students had no need of special services as a group. One opined “A lot of them are born in Antigua, so they speak English like Antiguan children. They don’t perform (on the CEE) any worse

than Antiguan children” (Interview 31). One contributed “They have been here a good ten years or so in the population. They perform the same as other students” (Interview 28).

The situation of the Spanish speaking population raises the issue of access and equity at the lower levels of education for this group. The absence of statistics and information pertinent to this group makes it difficult to conclusively determine educational achievement levels and to make accurate needs assessments in relation to them. Some analysis of the situation of this group is required in order to plan proactively, to ensure their smooth integration into the social and educational environment at all levels.

What factors prohibit access to and equity in higher education?

The factors that create inequitable access to higher education in Antigua and Barbuda correlate to the three types of inequities in higher education identified by Connell (2000) as structural, attitudinal/behavioral, organizational/programmatic. Some factors that prohibit access to higher education in the territories of the English speaking Caribbean have been described by Roberts (2000). These include: Space (geographical and accommodation); cost (development, delivery and travel); population size and economies of scale; technology; attitude of producers and consumers; the structure of opportunity; administrative leadership and gender. These factors also promote inequitable access, since, in the absence of mechanisms to mitigate circumstances such as poverty and disabling conditions, groups of people who are victim to conditions such as these, have least access to higher education services.

Roberts (2002) describes the space factor as pertaining to geographical separation of the learner from the institution-based teacher; situation of wide dispersion of consumers who inhabit rural areas and islands remote from services. Like many of the smaller nations in the Caribbean, Antigua and Barbuda's geographical distance from the UWI has historically been a factor prohibiting access to higher education services for the people of this nation. As earlier noted, this circumstance led to the establishment of Community and State Colleges in a number of these territories, including Antigua and Barbuda where the Antigua State College was set up to redress this situation. Space, in the sense of geographical distance, also represented a problem for people who resided on the island of Barbuda. This limitation also extended to the UWI. However, the distance education services provided by UWIDEC have to some extent mitigated this as a prohibiting factor.

The cost of tertiary education in Antigua and Barbuda is high in relation to the cost of living. Typically, students have difficulty receiving scholarships. Student loans are not guaranteed for all qualified students, and some students find loan repayments including interest rates, at times prohibitive. Some students are granted full scholarships, some receive partial assistance, and some receive loans. One official added that "for students attending off-island institutions, the cost of living and incidentals can prove high" (Interview 22). For fulltime, locally placed students, the absence of income can prove challenging, and for part-time students juggling study and work can prove difficult.

A factor limiting access and equity is the small population size of the island. This acts against the efficient use of resources and facilities. The population of students taking advantage of higher education services throughout the country has made it difficult to

justify the existence of some courses, and is insufficient to financially support programs. In larger systems a more efficient use of resources allows for the implementation of cost support systems which can provide some financial balance to the sector.

A number of measures have been instituted to remedy the effects of small size and space issues. Distance education and media-print have been utilized in the UWIDEC and Teacher Education programs respectively. The success of these programs depends on the reliability of the associated services. One teacher interviewed attested to the fact that often materials for the latter program are late in coming, and so thwart the efficiency of the program. Also the computer technology on which the former depends is unreliable (Interview 16). These contentions are supported by Primus (1998) and Marrett (2000), who point out the importance of efficient support services for the effectiveness of these accommodations.

Roberts (2002) identifies attitude of teachers and learners as a barrier to access. She argues that many teachers are resistant to those changes which they consider as undermining traditional education, and that many learners lack “the discipline, confidence and motivation” to function in a “self directed learning environment” (p.10).

In Antigua and Barbuda, the attitude of the national government has been identified as a factor prohibiting access to higher education. The lack of political will over the years is evidenced by the slow development trajectory of the sector. One person interviewed referred to the lack of financial support for the Antigua State College (ASC), and the unfulfilled promise of the establishment of a national university. Infrastructure and lack of supplies also indicate the lack of political support of the sector. One

participant contributed "The political will is lacking. St. Lucia's infrastructure is more advanced. There are better facilities" (Interview 26).

The attitudes of consumers and potential consumers are associated overwhelmingly with a lack of interest in pursuing higher education. Among others, this attitude was identified in Barbudan youth. Three persons interviewed, an ex- government official who had worked with the youth of this community, a student of the community, and a higher education official interviewed for this study commented on this apparent lack of interest in higher education evidenced by the youth of this community.(Interviews 20, 26, 19). In Antigua there are communities and pockets of communities where there also appears to be little motivation for higher education. These areas, identified via information extrapolated from the poverty survey, were the areas of the island most plagued by poverty.

Roberts (2002) lists administrative arrangements as an obstacle to access. She identifies resistance to change in the distance education program as an instance of this problem. In Antigua and Barbuda this is evident in the lack of political will with respect to infrastructural development and the allocation of resources to spur development. Administrative inadequacy is also evident in the tendency to duplicate scarce resources in a small sector which could be better served by sharing resources. The absence of a system which adequately incorporates second chance options for late developers also reflects a weakness in the administration of the higher education sector.

The Antiguan and Barbudan system of higher education bears evidence of the three types of inequities identified by Connell (2000). The structural inequities of this system stem primarily from the tradition of elitism, the legacy of the country's

relationship with Britain. The elitism inherent in the system has led to a number of structural inequities, which now serve as barriers to the expansion of the system. The attitudinal/ behavioral inequities stem largely from official sources. A lack of political will is evidenced in the system. This attitude is mirrored in the apathy exhibited towards the pursuit of higher education by some segments of the population. Organizational and programmatic inequities in the system are created by the academic requirements for access to institutions of higher education; the fact that college going information is not equitably accessible to all elements of the society; and that access to the financial support required to access higher education, such as exists, is often inadequate to meet the needs of the truly dispossessed in society.

Structural Inequities

Some inequities of a structural nature inherent in the Antiguan Barbudan higher education system are related to the elitist nature of the sector. Elitist tendencies are still inherent in the University of the West Indies, the main institution of higher education serving the English-speaking Caribbean territories, thus participation in higher education is to a large extent still determined by age old attitudes and policies. The unique personality of the English speaking Caribbean's higher education system stems from a combination of models from Europe, in particular the British model of education.

The meritocracy inherent in the system is compounded by community wide social and political structures which result in pockets of poverty, and make it difficult for many to achieve the standards required to gain admission to institutions of higher education. As a result large numbers of students fail to attain higher education, since access is granted

based on a system of merit which excludes large numbers of students at the early stages of education. The economic and social systems fostered the division of society into social classes. Reflected in the education sector, an elitist system developed, where the more well-to-do attended certain schools which tended to be better equipped, while the poorer segments of society received inferior educational services.

Structural elitism also extended to the higher education sector. Forde (2005) describes this “inherited system” as containing two disadvantages to the sub-region of the OECS: the elitist focus, and the fact that the more acceptable features of the British system could not effectively be transferred into the “struggling, undeveloped and predominantly primary producing economies of the region” (p.4).

Ex-Prime Minister of Jamaica, Norman Manley, (as cited in Walker, 2000), made two statements pertinent to the role of education in the Caribbean. He said; “education is a political agent because it must, by its very nature, either tend to preserve the status quo or promote change... The first legacy of colonialism was an educational system designed to meet the needs of a backward unsophisticated and dependent economy”(p.148).

He further stated:

The educational system must be designed to eliminate the last vintages (sic) of class disadvantages in Jamaica...a moral imperative...also a pragmatic imperative, no society can afford to deny its best skills by limiting educational opportunity to a section of that society (p.148).

The socio-political role of education in the Caribbean is highlighted in these statements. While the UWI had an “elitist” mandate, its intention was the democratization

of education. Taken in the context of the time period, however, this did not translate into higher education for the masses. Walker (2000) argues that the original mandate of the University of the West Indies required that the institution serve the brightest and academically best of the region. Education was not intended to serve the masses, but the academically best prepared.

Designed to assist in developing the region, the UWI still retained much of its British orientation in terms of admissions policies; education offerings and relevance to the development imperative of the region suffered. The admissions policies acted to omit large segments of the population from pursuing higher education goals. Thus a combination of elitist educational policy, and meritocratic systems, characterized by poverty and patronage, were some factors that could be associated with structural inequity to higher education in this system.

Equal access is only one component of equity in higher education. Spaulding and Kargodorian (as cited in Walker, 2000) propose four additional criteria: the impact of the wider social, economic and political system; the participation of students in curriculum planning and development; the provision of equal chances for success of all students; and the equality of life chances after graduation.

In a study on the democratization of higher education in Jamaica, and the role of the University of the West Indies, Walker (2000) sought to discover to what extent the UWI functioned to influence the democratization of higher education in Jamaica. This researcher sought to determine the level of the UWI's collaboration with the centralized education system in achieving equity of access; the impact of the university's original mandates and entrance criteria on establishing equity of access, UWI's interaction with

the larger economic, social and political structures of the society; and the role of international donors in influencing equal access. The study also sought to look into the issue of equitable participation by students of different backgrounds, and establish to what extent relevance and diversification were built into the curriculum to promote equality of educational results.

Walker (2000) found that while UWI's history on equal access remained undistinguished, that a number of activities had been put in place to enhance student participation in decision making. Regarding UWI's record on achieving equality of educational results, Walker found that rates of access to the UWI were still far below that of other regions of the developing world, but conceded that efforts were being made by the university to effect the democratization of higher education. Walker claimed that the "paltry impact" of the university was due to a combination of: limited resources; the institution's stifling elitist interpretation of access to higher education; and the limitation of being a regional university.

Sherlock and Nettleford (1990) while admitting that the UWI's standards are often considered prohibitive, outlined the many concessions which over the years the institution made in the direction of providing equitable access to higher education to the citizens of the Caribbean region. These authors, both of whom served the university at the highest administrative levels, contend, that as an agent of social change, the university has provided access to a large number of gifted children from low-income groups. In fact they quote a percent increase of participation by this group to nearly 50%, occurring between the 1960s to the mid-1980s.

While the countries of the Caribbean remained relatively politically stable, and even while there was a level of economic growth, disparities existed that were anathema to the positives. Sherlock and Nettleford (1990) point out that those who possessed wealth were becoming richer, while the poor were becoming poorer. These authors question the role of the university in this scenario: "Was the University building the 'new plantation story?'" (p.195) In other words was a new elite replacing the old elite? This reinforces the point that access should not be viewed as a privilege, restricted to the economic and the intellectual 'haves, but constitutes a 'right' and should be available to those who desire it.

The issue of elitism in the University of the West Indies is often discussed in the context of the upholding of high academic standards. The lowering of admissions requirements, and the differentiation of the curriculum is often construed by some as an indication of the lowering of standards. And it is sometimes contended the UWI is wont to abandon its traditional methods of procedure in favor of more open access. In fact the UWI has implemented a number of measures with the specific intention of expanding access: first the Extra-Mural centers, later the Schools of Continuing Education, and more recently renamed the Open Campus, were the primary initiatives established to extend the benefits of the university to the non-campus territories. Challenge programs were instituted, allowing students in the non-campus territories the opportunity to register for classes, engage in self study, or be tutor supervised, and sit the examinations in June. The UWI's distance education service was put in place to serve populations of the region who were unable to attend regular classes.

Even more importantly, recognizing the importance of all branches of knowledge, the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), which works in concert with the University, established certificates in Technical and Vocational education, cognizant of the fact that technical and vocational education has been neglected in Caribbean academia, and recalling the stigma and inferior status generally accorded this branch of education. The institution of this line of certification will result in a larger pool of 'certificated' graduates throughout the region (Blom & Hobbs, 2008).

The other components of the higher education sector of Antigua and Barbuda, the Antigua and Barbuda State College, the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of International Technology, the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Institute, somewhat less elitist in orientation, were formed with mandates more in tune with the expansion of access to the citizens of the country. It is important to note, however, that while the Antigua State College sought to increase access by having a lower entry requirement than the University, the entry standards are not all-inclusive along the lines of the American Community College. To be admitted to any of its five or six programs candidates must have passed a minimum of five subjects in the CSEC or GCE exams. These qualifications require a number of years of study, thus effectively excluding members of the population who fail to meet the standards required for successful completion of the Common Entrance Examination, and the Post Primary Test. Roberts, (2006a) notes that formerly, entrance to Engineering and Business programs at the Antigua State College did not require passes in CXC/ GCE, and that this stipulation was a later addition. It would appear therefore that this institution has become less accessible as opposed to more accessible in nature.

The formal entry criteria to the ABIIT include a certain number of passes at the formal level for many of its programs. However, it appears that, at the discretion of the administration, the successful completion of certain certificate programs, which do not need formal certification for entry, can serve as entrance requirements for other programs with certification requirements. One interview participant yielded the information that in some cases lower entry requirements have been accepted based on other criteria. This latter arrangement seems to represent a rudimentary type of open access, with its entry policy, a type of "whosoever will" policy, built in at the lowest levels, and rudimentary mechanisms in place to allow for vertical articulation throughout the system. This institution thus appears to represent the closest example in the system of what could be considered an open access policy, with vertical articulation potential.

Equity in higher education is an ideal. Like democracy and freedom it is a concept which relies for its interpretation on relativity. It is the beacon which directs people to move in a particular direction.. It is rarely, if ever, totally realized. As benchmark points are arrived at, new situations emerge which require solution.

Elitism in higher education deprives many people of their right to education. In the Antiguan and Barbudan context the more traditional institutions maintain the policy of rigorous entry requirements. Such requirements act to prohibit participation by a large segment of the population. A number of measures have been introduced by the UWI that result in increased participation, however, these measures still exclude a large segment of the population. Research suggests a factor explored later in this study, that a significant percentage of students are barred the option of pursuing higher education based on performance in the early years of their educational careers.

The institution of the ABIIT of a type of “open access” clause appears potentially to put in place a mechanism of access to higher education of which individuals who have experienced failure in the earlier levels of the education system can avail themselves.

Class Distinct Schools

The structural inequity in the elitist policy of the education system at the lower levels has led to creation of class distinct schools in Antigua and Barbuda. Traditionally the “Grammar School” and the “Antigua Girls High School” were the public schools attended by the children of the more affluent members of society. In later years the schools became more inclusive, but maintained the reputation of being the best schools in the twin-island state.

The tests taken by students at the end of their elementary career also reinforce the formation of class distinct schools. The top 60 students who obtain the highest scores on the Common Entrance Exam are allowed to choose the high school which they attend. In this context students generally opt to one of two schools to the exclusion of others. One of the schools is exclusively for boys, the other for girls. Consequently, the top students academically, and often students from the upper social groups, tend to attend the same schools. As a result a class distinction is to an extent created in the educational system.

Second chance options

Statistics show that although universal primary education exists in Antigua and Barbuda, a large percentage of this population does not attain secondary education. This is largely due to failure on the Common Entrance and Post Primary Exams. These exams

therefore negatively affect the college going process. These students are found ineligible, are denied adequate opportunities to “catch up” later in their academic careers. These are often the more disadvantaged elements of the population. Students who come from wealthy or middle class families can opt to attend private institutions, or be privately tutored. The absence of provisions for reentry into the educational system effectively denies students the right to obtain higher education. Thus human development is unrealized, and human potential wasted.

State of Higher Education Facilities

The state of education facilities and in particular those reserved for the higher education sector, demonstrates the attitude of the political elite to the sector. The educational facilities which house certain of the programs of higher education are reportedly inadequate. One participant commented “There is no building. No good facility – and (they are) not trying to adapt (the) old buildings” (Interview# 1). Institutional safety and adequacy should be guaranteed. Schools should be equipped with technology and material to support the instructional efforts. This requires government planning at the various levels of the educational spectrum. The deteriorating educational standards described by participants (interviews 1, 16, 26) among others, could possibly be symptoms of administrative neglect. The declining scores, diminishing teacher quality and dedication described by interview participants (Interview 2) could be reflections of low morale, produced by a system characterized by poor structural quality, lack of equipment, instructional material and neglect. The reform to the system should include attention to the structural and infrastructural integrity of school buildings.

Cost Support for Low-Income Students

Another weakness attributable to the attitude of the political elite to education is the issue of financial funding for low-income students. The findings of this study suggest that while educational opportunities have increased, accessibility in terms of financial support to assist students to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered, has waned. Certain scholarships previously awarded on an annual basis, have been discontinued. Most notably, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the local Millionaire's club, (The Mill Reef Club), which had been reliable sources of scholarship funds, have ceased being donors (Interview 2). This retrogressive aspect affecting the availability of cost support for higher education has resulted in low income students facing greater difficulty in considering pursuing higher education. Many of the scholarships, previously offered, covered the full costs of students' attendance at institutions of higher education.

The government needs to negotiate more scholarship opportunities with donor nations and agencies to enable students from disadvantaged families to participate in higher education. Students from low-income families should have recourse to a variety of social services. Such measures should be available from early school years. Policies and procedures should be implemented to ensure access to secondary education. In this connection the government should consider the best practices of other educational systems, which allow students to progress through primary and secondary education uninterrupted. This would allow children to mature before being "tested out" of the system early in their educational careers.

Excessive Rigor in Curriculum and Assessment

Programmatically and organizationally, the system of education in the Caribbean, including Antigua and Barbuda is associated with rigor both in the curriculum and in the assessments used to measure the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Admission to the UWI system can be acquired by one of two paths. Even the less rigorous requirement makes access to the institution unattainable to a large segment of the population. A table compiled from the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Statistics shows that in the year 2000, of a total of 442 students, who were examined in five or more subjects, only 54.1 % were successful in gaining the requirements for acceptance to the regional university (Howe, 2005, Table 11). As the main institution of higher education in the region it would be in the UWI's and the region's interest to establish procedures to enable a larger segment of the population to enter the university at some level, and progress, albeit at a slower pace, through the system. Taken by itself, the preparation time necessary to prepare for these exams as external students, through self-study, is prohibitive to students who must work to sustain themselves and contribute to the family income. A denial of access to engage in higher educational pursuits is tantamount to denying the human rights of individuals. Access policies and admissions procedures should be structured to allow participation by the largest number of people possible.

Lack of Access to Information

Another inadequacy related to program efficiency concerns the dissemination of college going information. One respondent in the study indicated that the dissemination

of information regarding college-going information was not adequate. The need for the authorities to “create more awareness” was noted. This interview participant expressed the opinion that while more was being done than in previous years to disseminate college going information, further measures needed to be adopted to ensure the equitable dissemination of such information. This participant cited “More dissemination of information to secondary schools” as intrinsic to the equitability of access (Interview 19). This participant identified a need for the establishing of procedures which would allow all citizens access to information regarding the applications, financial aid, and other college-going processes.

The UWI, as the regional university, needs to improve methods presently used to inform the regional citizenry of its policies and criteria for entry. Responses to the interviews suggested that the university was not a household word throughout the region, but to some extent still occupies a remote spot in the regional landscape. In today’s global knowledge society this institution needs to play a more pivotal role throughout the region. To quote an academic of the region “The UWI can no longer serve society from an aloof position in an indirect way” (Poon-Kwong, 2006, p.59).

Research Question 2 - What has been done at official levels to promote access to and equity in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?

What has the national government done to promote access and equity in higher education?

The EFA report (2000) states that the government of Antigua and Barbuda aims to provide educational services that are accessible, equitable and of a high quality for all

the citizens of the state. (EFA Report, 2000). Possibly the main function of the national government in promoting access and equity in higher education resides in its role in securing an education for all citizens at the earlier levels. Antigua and Barbuda has achieved universal primary education.

There are about 32 public primary establishments and 30 private ones in the country. The primary student population is estimated at 11,337 students. In the Junior Secondary division there are 12 government and 6 private, a total of 18 schools, servicing 1,124 students. At the upper secondary level there are nine public and ten private schools. The total student population is about 6,801 students (George, 2009). At the tertiary level, the main publicly funded institution, the Antigua State College, has a population of over 800 students.

The Education For All (EFA, 2000) report estimated that for the time period 1991-1995 30.3 per cent of the budget allocation for education was allocated to the primary level, 34.1 to the secondary, and 8.4 per cent to the tertiary education level. The contribution of the national government to education averaged 13.2 per cent of the GDP from 1991-1995. This is high by developing world standards. Most of the education budget allocation of EC\$ 41,733, 630, and EC\$ 44, 035,217 for 1994 and 1996 respectively was spent on teachers' salaries (EFA, 2000).

The main role of the government thus revolved around strengthening the earlier levels of schooling: the achievement of universal primary education, and efforts to approach universal secondary education; establishing schools in communities; the institution of the Education Act; the establishment of the education Levy. In terms of direct contribution to the tertiary level the government has seen to the establishment of

the ABICE, ABIIT, the ASC and the Hotel Training Institute, the National Student Loan Program and the negotiation of scholarships as part of bilateral agreements with friendly nations. For a number of years the idea of establishing a national university has been mooted, but no concrete moves to realize this goal have been made.

What have institutions of higher education done to promote access and equity?

Higher education institutions associated with Antigua and Barbuda have sought to expand access by implementing a number of measures. The growth of the UWIs enrolment in the 1960s was noted by Paul Parker (as cited in Sherlock & Nettleford, 1990). Parker stated “the opening of new campuses, the launching of evening programs, the development of new faculties and programs; as well as the provision of preliminary or remedial courses; the growth of secondary schools and the institution of free public schools coincided with these occurrences at the tertiary level. The increased flexibility in the entry requirements of the university, and the growth in scholarship programs in the various territories also helped to promote access” (p.187).

According to Parker, after independence the UWI began a transformation from a “narrow, elitist institution to one which was moving steadily toward being open, democratic and diverse” (p.187). The result was increased enrolment rates, reduced entry requirements; the establishment of the Cave Hill campus in Barbados, and the institution of University Centers on the non-campus territories.

At the regional level these University Centers, also known as extra-mural departments, later called the departments of Continuing Education, represented an “older mechanism of access” in the regional system (Sherlock & Nettleford, 1990). These sub-

units of the UWI provided opportunities for access to higher education for the communities that they served. The centers offered a variety of options for further studies from special interest non-credit courses, to certificate courses and studies leading to degrees in various disciplines. The UWI Executive MBA program was instituted to allow access to persons who had acquired years of experience, but who lacked traditional admission requirements. These individuals were given the opportunity to read for the masters degree in business.

Traditionally some people had taken the option of pursuing higher education goals via external degree programs. The British University of London's external programs were among the most prominent in the region. A number of lawyers in the region gained their credentials via this route. These programs were rigorous, but provided access for qualified persons who lacked the resources required to pursue courses of study overseas for extended periods of time. While these programs expanded access to some degree, they did not serve to significantly affect the imbalance implied by the absence of equity in these systems.

The establishment of ABICE and ABIIT in Antigua contributed to the expansion of higher education services to the twin-island state. The ABICE facilitated the pursuit of studies in continuing education, general education and Industry and Commerce, allowing students to complete high school studies leading to the high school diploma, take computer classes or engage in skills training in one of a number of trades Interviews 1,2,8,24). In an ideal system, upon acquiring the high school diploma, students should be able to continue their pursuit of educational goals to any level desired. This however does not appear to be the case. The rigid requirements for gaining admission to the UWI, the

ASC and the ABIIT prohibit an easy transition from the second chance opportunities potentially offered by ABICE.

According to an official of one institution (Interview 24), the possibility exists for such a transition to be made, however, there is as yet no clear specific route established by the higher education administration, allowing continuing education candidates “soft” admissions, and the option to progress from entry level to Associate, then Bachelor’s degrees and upwards. In fact, according to expert witness (interview 26) even students completing the first year program of the university are not guaranteed automatic access to the university within the context of the two + 1 plan, which enables students to complete 2 years in Antigua and Barbuda, then, on completion, the final year of studies at the UWI. Students must meet and pass rigorous tests before being accepted into the accelerated program.

Some institutions in the system, the ASC, the UWI center and the ABIIT tertiary level courses do not specifically focus on prohibiting or encouraging access in terms of lowering admission standards. The standards are set and are commonly recognized throughout the community. Access to these programs takes the form of the existence of these programs, making them available for those who are qualified. The Hotel Training Institute and the ABICE have lower entry standards for many of its programs, and creates the opportunity for students who need training and skills, but lack the academic base to pursue university level studies.

The main concern of access which faces this system revolves around the issue of the ability of the structure that exists to support a true continuation of educational services. To what extent mechanisms exist that ensure that all students, irrespective of

age, social and economic status, gender, ethnicity, or physical status are able to obtain services that are in accord with the concept and practice of equitable access. Students who are unsuccessful at the earlier levels of schooling should later be able to reenter the system and pursue educational goals to the levels desired. Mechanisms should be designed to ensure that financially challenged students are guaranteed support to enable access to tertiary level educational services.

In response to the challenges of access and equity faced by the sector, higher education institutions have responded by creating increased avenues for participation. More institutions have emerged in response to the demand for increased access. Some institutions have materialized in response to the demand for skills in technology, and in support of the economic bases of the island. The increase in participation should not be confused with an increase in access. Educational access is denied if deficits in the socio-economic structure that affect motivation and opportunity are not redressed or taken into account.

How have higher education and government collaborated to promote access and equity in higher education?

As for many developing countries the national government and higher education have a symbiotic relationship. Higher education is treated as a part of the national education system and administratively falls under the Ministry of Education. This relationship has both positive and negative aspects, some aspects having, at the same time, both positive and negative connotations. One potentially positive aspect of the

relationship is the fact that national social and economic objectives can be built into the development of the sector.

With national government as the main arbiter and decider of activities in this sector, careful planning could result in human resource needs being successfully met by this sector. On the control of the government, the decentralized nature of the sector can stymie possibilities for its advancement. A government controlled higher education sector is staffed by civil servants. This may act against the freedom of expression inherent in the concept of higher education. Fund raising procedures normally engaged in by autonomous institutions of higher education may not be available to government run institutions.

In Antigua and Barbuda educational activities are governed by the Education Act of 1973, and the Board of Education Act of 1994. The first document made education in Antigua and Barbuda compulsory for all citizens of five to sixteen years, the second created a Board primarily for the purpose of administering the Education Levy. In the Act of 1973, references to higher education, its practice and procedure, are confined to a small paragraph. This paragraph, in addition to primary and secondary levels, recognizes level of “further education, which shall consist of –

full time education beyond secondary education or in addition to it; part-time education; leisure time occupation in organized cultural training and recreative activities available in pursuance of any provision made under this Act for pupils who have attained the age of sixteen years“ (Board of Education Act, 1994, Chapter 145 section 6c).

The national government and institutions of higher education have engaged in a number of activities designed to broaden access to tertiary education in Antigua and Barbuda. Efforts have been made to broaden access by the establishment of institutions offering diversified courses; the institution of franchise arrangements with various institutions; the operation of distance education programs; the institution of articulation agreements with some institutions.

The amalgamation of a number of institutions to create the ABICE and the ASC attest to this. The establishment of the ABIIT has assisted students to access higher education and earn degrees from institutions external to the region, building on the earlier examples of other providers, including the University of London. The setting up of the University of Health Sciences, established to prepare students for the American Medical Licensing Exam, though little used by the community up to the present, represents an opportunity for training cadres of medical professionals for the country.

The Tertiary Level Institution (TLI) Unit, part of a tri-partite system, was designed to assist in the delivery of tertiary instruction to the non-campus territories, to off-campus centers in the campus territories, and to tertiary institutions in both sets of locations. Along with the other two components of the system, the School of Continuing Education and the Distance Education Center, these three are sub units of the Board for Non-Campus Countries and Distance Education.

The function of the TLI unit is to promote access to higher education in the various territories of the region by using the University of the West Indies' resources to develop tertiary education in the English-speaking Caribbean. The main objectives of the TLI are to increase the number of graduates by developing the tertiary institutions,

improving the quality and effectiveness of graduates through curriculum reform; monitoring programs and, where necessary, instituting the expansion of programs (certificate/diploma/ degree and continuing education and extension activities) to support national and regional priorities; overseeing and rationalizing the further development of tertiary level programs throughout the region.

The operational objectives of the TLI unit include: managing the articulation arrangements between the UWI and other TLIs in the region; enhancing the capacity of TLIs to deliver portions of or full degree programs; conducting research which focuses on the improvement of tertiary level development, and, in this connection, designing projects, procuring funds and managing initiatives for effecting these objectives.

Distance education programs enable students to complete graduate and post-graduate studies with external institutions. Degrees offered in the region are also available via distance education arrangements such as the University of the West Indies Distance Education Center (UWIDEC), previously known as the University of the West Indies Distance Education Teaching Experiment (UWIDITE). Distance education programs are also available with institutions in the USA and England.

Roherts (2002) describes the evolution of various methods for the delivery of higher education in the region. From 1948 to 1959 face to face and distance education methods for the acquisition of external degrees were limited. During this period in education within the region participation in face to face education was limited. Distance education for the earning of regional degrees was non-existent, as were franchise and articulation arrangements. In the 1960-1969 period, there was an increase in the

frequency of students accessing higher education for external degrees via distance methods.

During this period there was an increase in face to face regional education. At this time distance, franchise, and articulation arrangements began to be implemented. Between 1970 and 1995 face to face external higher education increased, and distance education became widespread. At the regional level face to face education was widespread, distance education had increased, franchise and articulation arrangements were widespread. In the period 1995 to the present face to face external degrees were on the increase, distance education was widespread; face to face regional degrees had become widespread, and franchise and articulation agreements were also widespread.

In Antigua and Barbuda the TLI unit and the national government have worked together to institute a franchising arrangement whereby the ASC delivers year 1 and year 2 programs of the UWI. First year programs include some courses associated with the award of Bachelors degrees in Natural Sciences and the Arts, as well as first and second year courses in the Social Sciences. Upon successful completion of this level of courses, students may then transfer to a campus for the remaining 1 or 2 years. This increases the rate in participation in higher education in the country. For the years 1998, 1999 and 2000 the ACS recorded participation in this program of 54, 49 and 60 students respectively. 65% of the 1988-1993 cohort went on to the next level (TLIU, 1997, as cited in Roberts, 2002).

A number of benefits accrued from this relationship: increased access for students who could attend classes without the cost incurred by physical relocation; a lessening of the expense to the government related to human resource development; the creation of

jobs in the community and the upgrading of skills for staff assigned to the programs. Two additional strengths noted by the TLIU unit include the fact that the recipient institution is able to retain its autonomy even while franchising the intellectual product of the franchising institution. Secondly, the maintenance of quality assurance through the frequent meetings of the two partners. These meetings should work to iron out the weaknesses of the programs and consolidate the strengths, and to ensure the synchronicity of program delivery in terms of reading materials, assignments, and test administration.

In the area of articulation agreements the national government and the higher education institutions in Antigua and Barbuda have not been instrumental in forging adequate links with other institutions to ensure that credentials from the local institutions are recognized. No such arrangements have been forged between foreign institutions and the national government, which represents the greater part of the higher education sector. Other colleges in the region have forged a number of such agreements, enabling graduates of the local community and other colleges to pursue studies abroad with advanced credit rating.

At the regional level, the ASC has established articulation arrangements only with the UWI and the University of Technology in Jamaica. At the local level, from all reports, it appears that no attempts were made to establish arrangements articulating the various programs that exist within the sector. As a result of this smooth transitions from one institution to the next do not exist. The only mechanisms of articulation that exist appear to be those instituted by the University for advancement in the UWI system. Apart

from those, the certificates or diplomas earned within the system have not been officially recognized to facilitate transfer of credit to a higher level of the local system.

The absence of articulation mechanisms represents an inherent weakness in the higher education system which can impact the integrity of the system. A well-articulated system offers options to the population, a means of upward mobility which is attractive in terms of potential financial remuneration, as well as the advantages offered to life-long learning and the award of credentials. The absence of such measures is frustrating to late bloomers who desire to pursue educational goals, and detrimental to the society which is unable to benefit fully from the contribution of those people who mature later, and pursue educational goals later in life.

In the case of the private components of the higher education sector, opportunities for articulation are dependent on the systems to which these institutions are aligned. ABIIT has a transfer of credit arrangement with the Certified General Accountants Association of Barbados (CGA). This institution is also affiliated to Skidmore College, Pace University, and Monroe College in New York, as well as the American Intercontinental University in Florida. Graduates of the programs of this institution are guaranteed access to these schools to complete Bachelor's level programs, and to pursue higher degrees. The University of Health Sciences prepares students for the American Medical licensing exam. The government supported programs however need to be more widely accredited, and articulation agreements need to be established with regional and international organizations.

Summary

The peculiar features of the Caribbean and Antigua and Barbuda higher education system speak to the hybrid nature of the education sector of this country. Pundits of Caribbean higher education, such as Roberts and Howe, have recounted the historical legacy of the Caribbean system of education. From its inception it was established to serve the upper classes of the region: originally to educate and ensure the basic education of the children of the colonial aristocracy, and to prepare a local class of citizens to service the interests of the colonial government; later to prepare a literate citizenry to man the institutions, primarily representing foreign interests, which mark the industrial and commercial sector of these territories. The education sector, including higher education, is a part of this super structure, serving the interests of the dominant elements of society, and is therefore reflective of the interests of the elite of that society.

The era of globalization requires a new mindset. This new era requires great introspection. Education must now serve a new master. More effective educational policies must be preceded by economic and social policies designed to effectively ensure survival in this new dispensation. The perspectives and policies of the technologically oriented twenty first century must be designed to equip the populace and the country to effectively survive the economic and social challenges of globalization.

Chapter VI

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the findings of the study, provide a cohesive discussion of the results of the study, and make recommendations for future research. The discussion presents an interpretation of the results based on the conclusions reached through the information provided by the combination of sources relied on for this dissertation.

This study explored the status of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda, specifically the situation of access and equity in the sector, and sought to determine to what extent higher education institutions and the national government had taken action to make higher education accessible to individuals in all segments of the country.

Interviews were conducted with stakeholders and participants in the higher education sector in Antigua, as well as a variety of government personnel in the system, from the education sector as well as other parts of the government service. Their feedback was instrumental to the conclusions reached in this study. Documents emanating from the government, including news releases were perused to evaluate the government position on, and support of, the higher education sector. Studies conducted in the country, including dissertations and papers, were researched to accumulate concrete and actual information on the operation of the sector. Studies conducted by, and information compiled by, international organizations were consulted for information on the performance of the country in educational, social and economic terms. These documents also provided a basis for comparing Antigua and Barbuda's performance to other countries in the region and sub-region.

In this chapter the results of the study are summarized and discussed in the context of the research questions, and the subdivisions of the questions with which they were associated in the body of the text. There are six subsections. Following the discussion some recommendations are suggested for creating a more effective and inclusive higher education system. Following this discussion are some suggestions for future research. A section summarizing the major results of the study concludes the dissertation.

Research Question 1 - What is the State of Higher Education in Antigua and Barbuda?

Who Participates ?

The study found that while there is increased participation in higher education that access is not equitable. In Antigua and Barbuda participation in higher education is regulated by factors associated with socio-economic status. The more wealthy generally participate at a higher rate than others. In the study it was discovered that there are groups in the country that are excluded from successful participation in higher education, and thus the student population “does not closely reflect the composition of the society as a whole” (as cited in James, 2000a, p3). Therefore, accordingly, higher education is not equitable. An examination of the primary school system revealed deficits that impact the ability of individuals to access higher education in an equitable manner. The fact that private schools performed significantly better on the high stakes Common Entrance Examination indicated that socioeconomic status was a significant factor in academic achievement. This group was more likely to be accepted directly to one of the secondary high schools, unlike other students who failed and were sent to a Junior Secondary

school. This has implications for higher education since most students able to access the tertiary level were high school graduates who had attended private primary schools.

Socio-economic disadvantage of individuals residing in certain areas extends to their schooling experience. Attending schools in certain areas compounds the deficits, and impacts the educational achievement. This prevents them acquiring the academic basics necessary to gain access to higher education.

Socio-economic disadvantage is reflected in the educational institutions of poor regions, affecting the educational achievement of students in those areas. The likelihood of accessing higher education is diminished for these individuals. Poverty stricken areas tend to have poor schooling facilities and poor educational results. The poverty study's finding of low educational levels by the residents of certain districts bears this out. A cyclical pattern ensues. Failure on the Common Entrance Exam (CEE), the Junior Secondary Exam (JSE) and the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificates (CSEC) exams impact the college going prospects of individuals.

Those participating in higher education are in the main those who possess the economic, social and cultural capital required to negotiate and navigate their way through the system. They overwhelmingly attended private primary schools. George's study (2009) found that the majority of the students who did well on the CXC exams had attended private elementary schools. These are the individuals who participate most frequently in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda. George's study also found that students who attended private schools tended to come from home where education was more highly valued than was the case with many public school students.

Are Sub-Groups equally represented?

All groups in Antigua are not equally represented in higher education. Some groups have limited access to higher education and are prohibited by socio-economic, socio-cultural, age related, physical, and other factors from participating in higher education.

People who reside in Barbuda are faced by physical distance from the mainland as an obstacle; while for people who inhabit rural areas the remote location of institutions of higher education prohibits access. People of low socio-economic status suffer economic and educational deprivation with all its ramifications. This results in diminishing their prospects of gaining access to higher education

In Antigua and Barbuda disabled people are generally not targeted as a group, and therefore are not usually provided with the interventions necessary to allow them to access higher education. This group suffers academic neglect. By not being provided with early interventions to allow them the opportunity to be successful they are ill-equipped to pursue advanced studies at post-secondary levels.

Older people are not a traditional college going population in Antigua and Barbuda. Higher education is usually associated with high school graduates who performed well. A small number of mature students take advantage of the UWI Mature Students clause.

Males participate to a lesser degree in higher education than females. At the Antigua State College the number of males is one half that of females. George (2009) found that at lower educational levels boys participate as much as girls, and that boys outnumber girls at the Elementary and Junior Secondary levels. At the secondary level,

however, girls outnumber boys. The diminishing number of males in education in Antigua and Barbuda begins at the secondary level, and continues to the tertiary level.

The finding that males participate less than females in higher education, is supported by the Statistics of the Scholarships and Awards. This document, published by the Scholarship Department of the Board of Education, provides the information that for the period 1995-2008, of the students receiving scholarship awards, 34% (678) were male and 65% (1,295) were female. For the 2008-2009 academic year 32.99% (160) males were granted awards as compared to 67.01% (325) females.

The school-aged members of the Spanish speaking population in Antigua and Barbuda appear to be underachieving academically, and not accessing higher education proportionate to their numbers in the society. The number of Spanish speakers is growing significantly, and this group may account for between 5 and 15 percent of the total population. One official expressed the opinion that soon the whole population would be very much mixed (Interview 29).

According to James' (2007) measure of equitability this population is not equitably served in the higher education system. The size of the population is not reflected in higher education or even at secondary level. This group has settled in the economically deprived areas and may have difficulties negotiating the English language in academic settings. One official conceded that overall the Spanish speaking students were underperforming. Although there are some exceptional students who are successful on account of their excellent academic and interpersonal skills, the overall situation of the Spanish speaking population in Antigua and Barbuda identifies them as a group which is

not negotiating the academic system effectively, and is thus presently unprepared to access and pursue higher educational goals.

What factors prohibit access and equity in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?

In Antigua and Barbuda some prohibiting factors to higher education in the Caribbean have been identified in the literature by Roberts, (2002) and categorized by Connell (2000). Roberts identified cost, population size and economies of scale, technology, attitudes of producers and consumers, the structure of opportunity, administrative leadership and gender as possible prohibiting factors. Connell identified three categories of inadequacies that affected systems of higher education.

In the Antiguan and Barbudan context physical distance from the UWI is a prohibiting factor. For the residents of Barbuda, distance from Antigua compounds their situation of remoteness from centers of higher education. This situation is somewhat alleviated by the UWIDEC program.

The cost of tertiary education in relation to the cost of living is considered high by residents of the twin island state. Scholarships are limited, and often do not cover the entire cost of higher educational services. Student loans are not guaranteed for all students and considered prohibitive by some. The institution of the National Student Loan Fund provides some assistance to families, but may not cover the entire cost of higher education services.

Small population size acts against the efficient use of resources. This makes it at best difficult to justify the existence of some courses, and at worst, economically insufficient to financially support certain programs.

Attitudes of teachers and learners are identified by Roberts (2002) as a prohibiting factor. In Antigua and Barbuda teachers' resistance to change was not identified as a prohibiting factor for this study. Learners' lack of "discipline, confidence and motivation to function in a self directed learning environment" described by Roberts (2002, p.10) may have been identified by some interview participants (Interviews 19, 20, 26) as a type of apathy among certain young people who appeared reluctant to explore opportunities to participate in higher education. This apparent apathy by some segments of the twin island community might be due to the deeper and more system induced cause of an absence of social and/or cultural capital, or a weakness in the dissemination of college going information, or the absence of a college going culture in the school system.

The attitude of the national government to the higher education sector, as evidenced by its neglect, prohibits the achievement of access and equity through a lack of financial support. This is especially evident in the case of the Antigua State College, which has poor infrastructure and lacks supplies and equipment. It is also evident in the political elite's slow realization of plans to elevate ASC to full university status. This latter falls into Roberts (2002) category of administrative arrangements as a barrier to access to higher education. Full university status would open up the pathway for accessing funding and working with other institutions to maximize efficient and effective management of resources.

The three categories of inadequacies identified by Connell (2000) as structural, attitudinal and organizational, also provide a framework for understanding and explaining some of the factors prohibiting access to higher education in Antigua and Barbuda. In the structural category, UWIs elitist mandate to "educate the brightest and the best"

translated to an intellectual elitist mentality, which translated to high standards of access through a system of meritocracy, which has served to exclude large segments of the population. Other institutions entering the system, such as the ASC and ABIIT, established with mandates focused on expansion of access, have followed this model, and have also been exclusionary in nature, even while providing increased access.

The policy of meritocracy has led in the lower educational system to creation of class distinct schools. Reflecting the socio-economic divisions which exist in the wider society, these schools, catering to the successful students, also cater to the more economically advantaged, because of the association of economic advantage and educational achievement. Lack of meaningful second chance options compound the situation of structural inequity, and lead to many students exiting the system, without credentials.

Connell's (2000) attitudinal category is best reflected by the attitude of the political elite to the sector referred to earlier. The neglect of facilities and equipment needs, at all levels of education including higher education, results in diminishing teacher quality and dedication, and declining scores identified by interview participants. The inadequacy of funding for participation in higher education needs to be addressed to allow more low income students the opportunity to participate.

Organizational and programmatic inadequacies exist in the excessive rigor built into curriculum and assessment at lower levels, leading to stringent admission requirements at the tertiary level. Required standards are unattainable by large segments of the population. One vice principal of a secondary school commented in reference to the exam: "They are hard. I can't pass them" (Interview 9).

Although the disseminating of college going information is much improved, interview participants identified the need for more information regarding the applications and financial aid process. These participants expressed a need for more information on the criteria for admission to UWI. It is evident that, as the regional institution of higher education, the UWI needs to be less remote and more of a household word.

Research Question 2 – What has been done at official levels to promote access to and equity in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?

What has the national government done to promote access and equity in higher education?

The Education For All Report (200) states that the “aim of the Antigua and Barbuda national government is to provide access, equity and quality education to all citizens regardless of socio-economic background” (EFA Report, 2000 para.11). In this regard the national government’s main achievement in promoting participation in higher education, probably resides in the achievement of universal primary education in the twin island state. At present the Ministry of Education is working towards achieving universal secondary education. The establishment of primary and secondary schools in communities, thereby making educational services available to wider segments of the country, is another achievement. The institution of the Education Act, which established the education levy that is used to fund the education program, has served to provide monies, some of which has been used to fund student participation at the higher education level.

The national government has also been instrumental in the establishment of a number of institutions, with the express aim of increasing participation in tertiary education throughout the country. The merging of a number of smaller institutions to construct the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE) and the Antigua State College (ASC) are examples of the national government's contribution to promoting access to higher education. The setting up of the Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology (ABIIT) also attests to the desire to expand access and increase participation in higher education. The Hotel Training Institute is designed to prepare individuals to work in the country's tourism industry, a main economic earner. The establishment of the National Student Loan Program, the negotiation of scholarships as part of bilateral agreements, and responsibility for the day to day running of these institutions, represent main aspects of the government's contribution to the higher education sector.

Problems exist born of the relationship between the government and higher education. The higher education system is the most neglected division of the Education department. More funds are expended on the primary and secondary divisions, and tertiary education is somewhat neglected.

What have institutions of higher education done to promote access and equity in higher education?

The opportunities for participation in higher education in the Caribbean, and in Antigua and Barbuda have risen with the increase in the number of institutions in the region. In addition, the UWI's setting up of new campuses, the availability of distance

education, the institution of evening programs, the establishment of the Continuing Education division (now the Open Campus), the development of new departments and programs, as well as the provision of remedial courses have led to a general growth in enrollment. The Mature Student Clause instituted by the institution provides the opportunity for participation by older individuals in the region. The establishment in Antigua of post secondary institutions allows students to complete high school studies and continue training in a number of areas. This undoubtedly has resulted in increased numbers of participants in higher education.

Problems exist. For academic classes admission requirements set at the commonly recognized high standards are difficult to attain by many in the twin island community. The Hotel Training Institute and ABICE have lower entry standards, but in many cases, apart from the traditional program track that prepares students for the CXC exams, the programs may lack the necessary academic base, and there appears to be an absence of institutional arrangements to allow a transfer of credits to other institutions in the system. This absence of inter-institutional arrangements for transfer of credits, prohibits access to education at all levels, locally, and fails to provide a path of reentry into the educational system for students who failed to meet established standards at earlier phases in their educational careers. Establishing articulation in the system would serve to make it more equitable.

How have higher education and the national government collaborated?

Higher education was established in Antigua and Barbuda by the Education Act of 1973, which recognizes a further education level categorized as full-time post-

secondary, or alongside secondary programs; part time programs, or leisure oriented programs of cultural training or recreation based activities, for individuals 16 years of age and over. In Antigua and Barbuda, higher education is part of the national education system and is administratively a part of the Ministry of Education. There is thus an intimate collaborative relationship which has implications for the functioning of the sector. A positive implication of this relationship is that national objectives can easily be designed to be addressed by the sector. A negative factor relates to the centralized nature of the sector, which can stymie the development of higher education in its commonly accepted autonomous station. Freedom of expression and other forms of intellectual creativity can be controlled. The sector, staffed by civil servants, is controlled by the government. There are also implications for raising and sourcing funds presented by this association.

The collaboration of higher education administration and the Ministry of Education delegated to administer the affairs of this sector, have led to some gains in extending opportunities for participation in higher education. The merging of institutions previously referred to has led to the creation of diversified courses of instruction. The establishment of ABIIT has assisted some individuals to earn degrees from institutions external to the region without incurring the expense and inconvenience of travel.

The tertiary level institution (TLI) Unit of the UWI is mandated to support the development of tertiary institutions in the region. This institution works with the government to support tertiary education, establish and maintain programs of the School of Continuing Education (now the Open Campus) and the Distance Education program. Gains have been made in a variety of areas. One example of such gains is the

establishment of Distance Education. The setting up of this program requires the collaboration of the UWI and the national government. Another area of collaboration are the institution of a franchise arrangement which was negotiated between the national government and the UWI, whereby the Antigua State College delivers year 1 and year 2 components of certain UWI programs. Articulation arrangements have also been negotiated with the UWI, owned collectively by the governments of the English Speaking Caribbean, and the University of Technology in Jamaica. The ABIIT, another government owned institution, has established transfer of credit arrangements with the Certified General Accountants Association of Barbados. ABIIT is also affiliated with Skidmore College, Pace University, Monroe College in New York, and the Intercontinental University in Florida, and have articulation and transfer of credit arrangements with these institutions. At the local level however, it appears that such agreements have not been formally established.

Since higher education is controlled by the government, there is a limit to the expansion of the institution in ways that would impact its expansion into a full-fledged university, with all the rights and responsibilities attached. Such a development would enable the institution to source funds and manage its operations, including admissions requirements, curriculum and its relations with other institutions of higher education, in a way that could foster increased and more equitable access to the residents of the country.

The findings suggest that while a number of initiatives have been implemented in Antigua and Barbuda which have resulted in increased rates of participation in higher education, enough has not been done to enhance access in an equitable manner.

Higher education services such as exist do not offer the opportunity for equitable admissions, and seamless progress through the system.

Overall, the results suggest that, while a number of initiatives have been implemented in Antigua and Barbuda which have resulted in increased rates of participation in higher education, enough has not been done to enhance access in an equitable manner. The findings indicate that while students in the higher education sector represent all segments of the community, the equity groups identified in this study are poorly represented. Most of the students in the sector come from the urban “town” and surrounding areas, and from the more affluent parts of the country.

In particular enough has not been done to address that population of students who fail to be successful at the earlier phases of the educational process. There is an overwhelming concern, in Caribbean and Antiguan higher education circles, with the compromise of educational standards, which may smack of intellectual elitism and may remove the focus from the right of citizens to pursue education at all levels. This concern prevents adjustments to access standards, and results in exempting a large segment of the population from pursuing higher educational goals.

Other populations of students poorly represented include: people who live on the island of Barbuda; people who live in outlying areas, especially those areas identified as lower in socio-economic terms; disabled students; and male students.

The findings further suggest that while the national government is the biggest provider of higher education services in the country, that the financial support of the sector is weak, as is the follow through on plans necessary for the consistent development

of the sector. The sector is plagued in some sectors by poor facilities, limited instructional material and a weak technological infrastructure.

The cost of local higher education services is reasonable when compared to other higher education sectors in the region, and should thus be a factor motivating increased participation. Loans are also available for students desirous of attending these institutions. Aspirations to attend higher education are however stymied by a number of factors including: a lack of information; limited social and cultural capital; poor performance at the earlier phases of the educational process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study highlights some of the issues related to higher education in Antigua and Barbuda with respect to access and equity in the system. Based on the findings of the study the following measures are recommended for the higher education sector of Antigua and Barbuda. Recommendations will be made in the order of the subsections of the main research questions which they address. Table 10 aligns the research questions and their subsections, the results of the study, and the recommendations.

In order to not only increase numbers but expand participation, institutions of higher education should develop higher education programs which target different skill sets and areas of interest in non-traditional subject areas such as the Performing Arts and Photography . This could serve to motivate differently gifted students to pursue advanced studies in their areas of interest or expertise. Teachers could also benefit from professional development training in the use of instruments which could help in determining children's propensities.

To facilitate the participation of groups previously denied, special economic programs should be created. Participation of reluctant individuals could be encouraged by aligning participation to jobs, and offering scholarships to certain categories of people. English as a Second Language (ESL) and/ or bilingual classes should be considered, to assist the effective integration of the Spanish-speaking students into the school system, and the community.

To address the factors that prohibit access to higher education, the Antigua State College should be removed and a beautiful, state-of-the art facility constructed. The ASC should be supplied with adequate quantities of modern ICT equipment and instructional supplies. To avoid the exiting of students from the school system early in their school careers, the Common Entrance and Junior Secondary Examinations should be used as measures to plan interventions for those students failing. Schooling should follow an uninterrupted sequence from primary through high school. Island wide campaigns should be implemented for disseminating college going information to all residents of the twin island state.

A registry of higher education should be established to monitor, plan and coordinate the activities of the sector. It is important that data on the sector be current to facilitate planning. The government should also make arrangements to participate in international tests such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), to establish the level of Antigua and Barbuda's educational performance relative to the international community.

Agreements should be negotiated to establish inter-institutional articulation and transfer of credit arrangements in the local higher education sector. This would serve to facilitate the vertical and horizontal alignments of programs, and possibly, in some cases, institutions. This would enable the smooth transition of students from one phase of education to the other, and one institution to the next.

The Antigua State College should be upgraded to full university status. As an independent and autonomous unit it would be able to source funds and engage in fund raising and other activities, create admissions policies and plan curricula which could lead to greater efficiency and effect greater changes, and establish policies which could build greater access and equity into the higher education system.

The design and implementation of a general equivalency diploma, along the lines of the GED in the United States, should be administered in Antigua and Barbuda. This would allow a second chance opportunity to students who, for one reason or another, failed to be successful in the regular examinations.

Long Term Development Plans

The government should construct development plans which give an indication of the educational needs of the country, and could create incentives to encourage training to be undertaken in areas critical to the development of the country. Aponte counsels: "The relationship education-development relies on the capacity to process information/ knowledge efficiently and to apply it so the production and distribution of goods and services enhance the overall quality of life." Aponte also points out that in the global environment education, information and knowledge are critical sources of wealth and

influence, and that class formation largely takes place in the schools and universities (Aponte, 2000).

In planning an education strategy the government must thus take these factors into consideration and play a role in steering the country along democratic lines by creating equity and diminishing inequitable processes related to the acquisition of higher education service.

MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

A number of findings resulted from this study. Some major conclusions which emerged, and which are considered of primary importance to enhancing equity and access in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda include: the improvement of education at the primary and secondary levels of education, the institution of articulation mechanisms at the tertiary level, the expansion of distance education services and finally, the provision of services to the Spanish-speaking population. These are discussed below.

The Improvement of Education at the Primary and Secondary Levels

Access to and equity of access in tertiary education would be greatly served by the improvement of academic achievement at the primary and secondary education levels. Available data indicate that levels of success on the Common Entrance Examination are lower than desired. In addition the passes on the Junior Secondary test are also low. This results in a large number of students exiting the educational system before attaining the high school level, which greatly impacts the ability of these individuals to later access tertiary education. The results of the CXC examinations show that even that percentage of students who do make it to this level do not all obtain

university entrance requirements. This issue should be addressed in three domains: at the levels of planning at primary and secondary education levels in terms of community development services, and at the tertiary planning level.

Approaches that affect remediation in the traditional way need to be implemented to redress deficiencies associated with poor pedagogy, different learning styles, and instructional deficits. Areas of weakness need to be identified, and measures of remediation implemented to improve the teaching and learning dynamic at the primary level, and to stem the rate of failure on these high stakes tests. Further, teachers need to obtain professional development in methods of teaching, and in applying best teaching practices to address the educational deficiencies.

Plans also need to be made to reduce the educationally fatal impact of failure on the Common Entrance and Junior Secondary Examinations. These tests should be used primarily to monitor and remediate levels of learning, to determine the learning deficits of individual students, and, if necessary, to place them on an alternative track to tertiary education. The role of these assessments presently acts to effectively terminate the academic life of students who are unsuccessful. In this regard other routes to the pursuit of tertiary level education should be developed, allowing students alternative routes to accessing higher education.

Following the practice in the United states, students should be allowed to take an equivalency test, which, if successfully negotiated, would allow them access to tertiary level education, where they could read pre-college or college level courses. Another option would be to allow open entry to pre-college level courses, and grant high school diploma status upon successful completion of a given number of credits. Yet another

option would grant credit for life experience, as well as independent projects undertaken by students and prospective students in areas in which they have some level of expertise. Guidelines for such projects would have to be carefully determined, to include academic, skill and or behavioral objectives.

Ideally, learning deficits should be remediated at the early levels of schooling. In Antigua and Barbuda, learning problems are apparent in the public schools as early as the second grade. These seem to become more pronounced by the fourth grade, culminating in poor results for the Common Entrance Examinations.

Table 11 shows the results of the grade 2 and grade 4 exams for the 2008 school year. The table shows that in the grade 2 assessment in 2008, in the public school system, only 54% of students were successful in Language Arts, and 43% in math. On average private school rates were 86% for Language Arts and 78% for Math. Students at this level are, on average, 7 years of age. The results of the grade 4 assessment show that in

Table 10

Grade 2 and Grade 4 Examination Results

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Grade 2 Test</i>		<i>Grade 4 Test</i>	
	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>
<i>Language Arts</i>	54%	86%	41%	79%
<i>Math</i>	43%	78%	19%	43%

Source: extrapolated from George, 2009, pp. 24, 27

Language Arts, only 41% of public school students were successful, and 19% in Math. For students enrolled in private schools the rates were 79% in Language Arts, and 43% in Math. Students at this level are on average nine years old.

Table 11

Common Entrance Exam Results, 2008

Common Entrance Exam Totals

<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>
55%	89%

Table 12 shows that, in 2008, 55% of public school students were successful in the Common Entrance Examination. By comparison 89% of the students enrolled in private schools were successful. Academic deficiencies are evident from as early as the second grade.

To address the problem of academic underachievement at the lower level, research findings provide evidence that supports the reduction in class size as an important and effective method of increasing academic achievement. Jeremy Finn and C.M. Achilles (1990) conducted research which confirms that in math and reading in the early primary grades, small classes have an advantage over larger classes. These researchers engaged in a four year long experimental study of reduced class size, which included over 7,000 students and 79 schools. The results of the project provide irrefutable evidence of the positive effects of reduced class size in student gains on reading and

math, for students who have been in small classes of no more than 17 students. This research has been presented at international fora.

An interesting aspect of this intervention is its continued effect. In a paper entitled “Fourth Grade Follow-up” researchers Finn, Fulton Zacharias and Nye (as cited in Health and Education Research Operative Serviced, Inc. hereafter I HEROES I, 2009) reiterated the findings of Project STAR which demonstrated that “average pupil performance in the primary years can be increased (with reduced class size) by approximately one fourth to one third of a standard deviation without the introduction of new materials or curricula and without retraining teachers,”(para.3). These authors, (as cited in I HEROES I, 2009) in summarizing their investigations with a fourth grade population, found that “Significant achievement advantages in a broad range of content areas were maintained one full year after the small classes were disbanded.” (para.3). It was also found that Project STAR students who were placed in small sized classes in grades K-3 had better high school graduation rates, higher grade point averages, and were “more inclined to pursue higher education” (para. 9).

Addressing the issue of student failure through the Class Size Reduction process, as advocated by Finn and Achilles, is a cost efficient means of reversing current trends, and raising the level of student achievement in the public school system.

To the extent that failure on these tests are partially attributable to the low social and economic circumstances of some students, these deficits are more systemic, and must be addressed at the level of government social and domestic policy. In a book entitled *The Shame of the Nation*, Jonathan Kozol (2005) looks at the American system of education, and points out the deficiencies of government policy which neglects to take

into consideration the limited circumstances of its most at risk citizens. Government social and domestic policy must take into consideration the plight of poorer citizens and establish a means through which students who are victims to these circumstances can avail themselves of the basics which they require to obtain adequate schooling. The provision of allowances for education supplies, meal tickets, clothing allowances, and free or reduced bus tickets are a few supplemental measures by which the government could provide assistance to the poor. The institution of programs should be carefully monitored to ensure that these measures serve the needy, and avoid the wastage of scarce resources.

Strengthening the Tertiary Sector

At the tertiary level, account should be taken of the difficulties faced by many students during their schooling years. Poverty, hunger and deprivation play a great part in determining the life trajectory of students. Assisting poor students to access higher education could take a number of forms. One possibility could include the use of a quota system to ensure that a certain number of students from the most economically challenged backgrounds receive financial assistance in accessing higher education. Another way of promoting access to higher education among the socially and or educationally disenfranchised, is the lowering of costs to institutions, or keeping the costs within an appropriate range.

For the national governments and families of developing countries, having to pay travel expenses for students pursuing tertiary education out of the home country is costly. The costs are incurred not only by tuition fees and incidentals, but the absence of income.

One way of assisting the less economically privileged to access higher education therefore, lies in making higher education truly accessible locally. In the context of Antigua and Barbuda this would necessitate establishing a system of higher education which allows seamless progression through the system. The creation of such a higher education sector of Antigua and Barbuda would require aligning programs and schools, and establishing articulation arrangements between the various higher education units, whereby each school would recognize and give academic credit for classes taken in other units. Course offerings and programs would have to be evaluated to determine their value relative to all others in the system. The Tertiary Level Institutions Unit of the University of the West Indies could consult in this matter.

At present, the main distance education program in Antigua and Barbuda is the UWIDITE program. This program is housed in a central location. Participants are required to come to a central venue, usually in St. John's City, to participate in classes. Access to higher education would be enhanced if distance education services were available across the island and in Barbuda. UWIDITE could be consulted in regard to the technical and financial ramifications of establishing this service. Alternative sources could also be consulted. Cuba, in the Caribbean region, has instituted distance education services to enhance access to higher education by sections of its population. Antigua's close relationship, educationally, with Cuba, creates another opportunity for exploring the feasibility of establishing expanded distance education services.

The Spanish-Speaking Population

The rapidly expanding Spanish-speaking population in Antigua and Barbuda must be recognized as a discrete group in need of specific services. These services could include second language remediation services and/ or bilingual instruction. A census should be conducted of the Spanish speaking population to establish numbers and areas of concentration. This would facilitate educational planning. Surveys also need to be conducted to identify language needs. Experts in socio-linguistics and languages, such as Dr. Bernadette Farquhar at the University of the West Indies, should be consulted in connection with planning for and meeting the needs of this population.

Suggestions for Future Research

Further research related to this topic could address the declining numbers of males in Antigua's and Barbuda's higher education system. This should be traced from the Secondary through the Tertiary sectors of the educational process. Interviews need to be conducted to identify from males themselves the issues which they perceive as related to the pursuit of higher education. A determination of the basis of the problem: a lack of finances? attitudinal/ related to cultural perceptions of higher education? gender? Does it reflect a lack of ability to compete with women in the society, and the changing roles played by the sexes? Is it related to the diminishing role of fathers?

Research could be conducted on attitudes to higher education in general, and a full scale investigation conducted to determine the causes of low rates of participation in Antigua and Barbuda.

Research could also focus on a quantitative assessment of levels of access to higher education. Such a study could calculate the percentage of children who enter the system at the primary level, and compare this figure to the percentage that gain tertiary education credentials.

An assessment could also be done of the areas of higher education opted for by school leavers, and the reasons for their choices. Such research could shed light on the college going behaviors, or otherwise, of school leavers, and could be a resource for education and economic planners in the country.

The road to achieving accessible and equitable higher education services in Antigua and Barbuda is fraught with challenges. Equity, like democracy, is an ideal that accompanies the pursuit of expanded educational services. The quest to make education more accessible to citizens, and to ensure its equitable distribution, is ongoing. As societies develop the stakes must be raised until all sectors of society are equitably included. As the global era marches on, the history of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda is still an evolving story. The social and economic development of nations is tied to the development of its citizens. The more educated the citizenry, the more developed the polity. Equitable participation in higher education is therefore integral to the development of the nation.

"A well-informed, literate population is a sine qua non for economic and social development, and a vibrant democracy." (Dr. Dennis Irvine, 2000)

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Appendix A

Interview questions and transcripts – Round 1

ROUND 1 INTERVIEWS

GROUP1

Interview1

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

I Received a scholarship in the 1960's.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

Yes. The Antigua State College allows you to take A' levels, and First year University program, and in some cases the last two years. If you are interested there are loans and scholarships. The Antigua State College offers two years of the University of the West Indies degree. There is ABIIT. They do mostly two year programs, then you pay for two years.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Accessible. Higher education is becoming more and more accessible. A lot of students go on campus only for the last year. In every island now you do two or three years and any campus accepts you for the last year.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

It is a necessity, and they are doing it. There is a tremendous movement to move students up to the top. A lot of them want to go the United States. You get credits for it. Banks are offering loans. Government has not done what they should do. They all love beautiful colleges. Each territory does not want to change and extend program. There is no building - no good facility - and not trying to adapt old buildings. There seems to be some resistance to doing this. In St. Lucia, Grenada, lovely colleges - but you have to pay. They are trying to take old buildings and revamp.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Yes. In a way. Anybody can go to State College. You don't pay. If you are ambitious. The teachers are guidance counselors now. A lot of them do degrees from colleges we don't know. Chairs buildings and so absent. They have to take what they get. (students).

I think Dr. Mansoor is doing an excellent job. He is putting computers in all the schools so that when they (students) graduate they have computer skills. The community can have access to computers.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Primary school students have lunch every day now.

-Children who fail the Common Entrance exam can get into hotel work etcetera. A lot of them do computer courses. As long as they get the hang of what to do. They are educating themselves. Once you get computer literate you have success in the world. A lot of independent education is taking place in Antigua. There is upward movement

towards education. The school of excellence.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Provide a plant that's satisfactory. A plant that's encouraging. Rebuild the college

Interview 2

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

Yes. Why? Everybody was going. It was easy to gain access to UWI. Now students doing first and second year at UWI makes it easier.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

Yes.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Accessible. We value UWI because we went there. Access is better than ten years (ago) because of grants. There are Cuban scholarships. At Independence time Greece and Malaysia gave scholarships. A lot more can be done. The Board of Education offers a grant of five thousand dollars (US). Most students prefer to go abroad. UWI is difficult.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

The government's role is very important. It is very important that you ensure that A' Level students move on to tertiary education immediately. Development is necessary. Antigua and Barbudans hold top positions (in institutions abroad).

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Why not. Let's face it. Now most children going abroad. Student loans to \$125,000 are available. Whole scholarships are not available anymore. CIDA (Canadian) scholarships and Mill Reef scholarships don't exist anymore. Skidmore offers scholarships to teachers. There is the University Without Walls. To get a grant you must be a citizen. As a citizen you have access.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

The Common Entrance examination is open to all students aged 11-12. As long as you do well. In Antigua it is easy. Most students want to get to the two top schools. Everybody can't go there. Some people are opting to go to the Princess Margaret School. Some people opting for other schools. There is easy access. Free school uniforms. Free text books, and free school meals beginning in 2008.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

The government must make a concerted effort to get increased access. As early as First

Form students must want to achieve higher education. There must be a national drive. The role of UWI to encourage Caribbean students and develop Caribbean persons. Encourage adults.

Interview 3

Question 1: *Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?*

Yes. I wanted to benefit from a Caribbean education. To get an education better suited to the developmental challenges of Antigua and Barbuda.

Question 2: *In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?*

Yes, because the UWI has two year programs at the State College. Also the Board of Education provides funding for study.

Question 3: *Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.*

Selective, because you have to have A levels to get in. This creates a “weeding out” process. [The UWI is] excellent in terms of needing each candidate to rely on logic.

Question 4: *What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?*

Government has to play a major role because education is a developmental issue. If we hope to expand opportunities, to have citizens contribute, we must ensure that students have a minimum level of understanding to help technology.

Question 5: *Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.*

That depends on where you want to go. UWI offers a program that is incredibly inexpensive.

Question 6: *How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.*

[I] have no knowledge. There are different grades of primary. There are private schools equipped with technology. The government schools may lack equipment which may have an influence on output. May not be equipped in terms of equipment. It depends.

Question 7: *What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?*

[Government’s role is] to bridge the gap between schools which are equipped and those which are not. Retrofit the schools. Make sure they are safe then outfit the schools

Interview 4

Question 1: *Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?*

Yes. To pursue higher education. To get a better paying job.

Question 2: *In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?*

Yes, but there are financial constraints and a very limited number of scholarships. Beyond that you have to pay your way.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Selective. Sometimes not based only on qualifications, but on a quota.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

[Government] should offer more scholarships, [and lobby for] more first and second year courses in Antigua. We are limited in terms of offerings. [We could] at least offer a faculty in Antigua and [open admission] to other territories. This would cut down the cost for all concerned.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

The quality is good. Once they have successfully completed primary and secondary levels they [students] would be well-prepared.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Offering first and second year university programs and a full faculty. This would make economic cost more affordable. It would produce a much greater number [of university graduates].

Interview 5

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

Yes. I was offered a scholarship.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

Increasingly so because there is the Antigua State College (ASC) Distance education, the RDI and a number of different training programs. ABITT (Antigua Barbuda Institute of Information Technology). A lot of people are now going to ABITT.

In terms of equity the gap is narrowing because of ABIIT and ASC. [With these institutions] there is no deterrent of economic cost etc. Representatives of different programs and ABIIT are right here in Antigua.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Accessible. [Students] don't have to do the SAT. They can get in on O' levels. It is costly for students to go to England.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in

enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

[Should follow the model of] Japan and Korea where we want everyone educated. (Not that we should stop collaborating with UWI), but we should concentrate on ensuring a high quality universal primary and secondary system, so that any Antiguan can compete anywhere in the world. We should not still use the Common Entrance Exam to advance from primary to secondary school. Consider the Belgian model of universal education to age 14.

Government needs to commit itself to at least junior secondary. Some of the money used on tertiary education should be spent on universal elementary education. Providing stimulus and standards for early childhood education, most of which is conducted in private institutions. Government tries to provide training for teachers of these schools. This needs to be strengthened and increased training capacity provided.

Primary Education

The government provides a proportion primary education. They have concentrated in rural, low-income, grass-roots communities. Government primary students not doing well on exam. Need to improve quality of performance of students.

Secondary Education

Government more involved in this level of education. There is a need to address violence and crime issues by improving discipline. Lack of discipline is weakening the quality of instruction.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Increasingly equitable. All students are able to go to the internet and download application forms etc. Equity is increasing. Training is being offered by walled and unwalled institutions. Some examples: (ABITT, RDI (distance program), Skidmore, ABICE, ASC). These are mainly evening institutions.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

That is where the inequity exists. Equity is there for those who meet the standards. Don't think enough meet the challenge. There is access... the equity is compromised. Not convinced that social programs guarantee equity. Many of the social programs go into conspicuous consumption, and may not go back to benefit the children.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Need to strengthen service delivery, the quality and quantity of primary and secondary education. Need to provide a place in secondary school for every primary school student. A significant change has to be made in education along the lines of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator where education is oriented to meet the individual potential of each differently gifted child.

GROUP2

Interview 6

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

Yes. Was awarded a scholarship. This was the only college in the [English-speaking] Caribbean, and is of high repute. Comparable to top colleges in England.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

Anyone who reaches a certain standard can apply. The standards are high. You have to meet the standards.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Selective. Its reasonably selective. Its not just a prestige thing. It's a scholastic thing. Once you can meet the standards and pay the money.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

The government is supposed to do these things. Government's role is minimal. This should not be the case. Sometimes they have scholarships and no one knows (that's what I've heard from reliable sources).

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Its accessible but not equitable. Everybody does not have money. When scholarships are available everyone should know. But people are selected. People who don't have money can't get there.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

You need to have a standard. Measured against the American standard I think the Caribbean standard is high. In secondary schools there is an increase in secondary education. Education seems to be going in the right direction.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

There needs to be a set system for letting people know about scholarships. A process needs to be put in place. People who administer scholarships need to put a process in place and follow it.

Interview 7

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

Yes. I could afford it since I had a full scholarship.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

No. All Antiguan's don't have access to secondary education. Without meeting the entrance requirements for secondary education they cannot advance to higher education.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Selective. Now it is more accessible. Now you can do UWI from the island...once you meet the requirement. Not totally from the island.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

The government determines who gets scholarships. They guarantee the economic cost for some students; provide low interest loans, responsible for upgrading and enhancing distance education

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

No. Antigua is classist. High class has access to politicians. Class has always played a part in who is recommended for scholarships. Class plays a part in where you go to school. (Grammar School and High School etc.) Upper and Middle class students get favorable treatment.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Once [Caribbean students who are successful at the Primary and Secondary levels] enter higher education, their rate of retention is high. In the Caribbean this is not a natural next step. Educational opportunities outside of college exist. Retention is 90-95 percent. Early preparation in rural areas is of the same high standard. In some areas you may end up with better teachers. Kids who go to school in rural areas have the same opportunities. They are exposed to different things at home. This might make things a little different. High School and Grammar School might offer a wider range of subjects. Certain schools are given preferential treatment.

A distinction is made between schools. The highest 60% of test scorers get to choose their school. Most of these go to the Grammar and High schools. Schools are clustered by class. Access is not equitable at this level. There is a class system in schooling. Schools do not have equal facilities etc.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

[As this relates to the UWI] open up the Extra-Mural (Continuing Education) department in terms of offerings. Extra-Mural should make an effort to get through the selection process. To take exams and pass them.

Interview 8

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

Yes. I was awarded a full, open scholarship by the Mill Reef Club (millionaires' club) in 1965.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

There has been a significant improvement. Until 1994 Antigua depended on scholarships from various donor agencies. Frequency of degree programs began to abate. People began to talk in terms of technical training for technicians. Short term training for people who had left school. Trainers were brought in so that what was normally expended on a single person, trained (over a six month period) several people. The lack of accreditation created problems, but it whet the appetite of a lot of people to seek higher education. Bursaries were provided. \$10,000.00 a year is now offered to people who want to go into higher education. Since 1994 there has been much more positive response to training and education by correspondence. - distance learning- Some supported by UWI extra-mural studies. Teachers' Union facilitate teachers.

Has widened significantly. An executive MBA program is offered. A lot of people are trying to access the Masters degree through distance learning. They are talking about merging the Hotel Training Program with ABIIT. Post secondary training is expanding. The hotels are interfacing with regional and international institutions that offer post-secondary training. The banks are helpful in offering different types of loans.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

UWI too closed door. Programs not exciting. Carried on from A' levels. There is a marked change. Interest in environment came out of UWI. UWI has built on the challenge program. In most of the UWI contributing territories students can pursue two years of study in home country. People with families are able to pursue studies without leaving home.

The curriculum has been expanded to include technical areas. The range is wider. Transfer of credits is possible. Skidmore offers summer program. Some people are working on PhDs through this process. A lot of people get help from the Board of Education. Cuba has a six year program. Some people come home with Masters degrees after five years. People also go to Mexico on scholarship. The Chinese offer scholarships.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

The government is making an effort to open up as many portals as possible that people can gain at least undergraduate degrees. At the technical level, and at degree level people are encouraged to offer scholarships. e.g the Chinese. Nationals are trained abroad. If you train and come back and its difficult to access jobs... its difficult. Government's major thrust is to continue to support the Board of Education to give a financial leg up. Government needs to look at specific areas of training. Has not seen development as priorities based. The matter of public sector reform..to train people who have the guts to come back and show government how to deal with issues in public service. Generalized areas are preferred. A package is offered. People have left. No effort at post-secondary training for people in certain areas. There are some deficiencies in how they plan for that.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

It is! In that government has offered free education at secondary level which allows academic success to [institutions such as] ASC and ABICE, using skills base to upgrade training programs (for persons who have missed high school opportunity).

Question 6: *How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.*

The drop out and truancy rates have risen. Mixed type of society these days. Antigua's literacy rate is falling, especially amongst the male population. There is free education up to the State College level. The State College takes a small amount of money. For a country with little resources, one of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean (OECS) states we have more access than [many of the larger states].

Question 7: *What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?*

The planning of the plants. The State College does not provide the environment for modern setting educational experience. Teaching staff needs to be trained (especially at tertiary level). Need for material support - strengthening of the library and other resources. The knowledge is there but chalk and talk is still the order of the day. Computers are more a teaching tool than available for use by students. We need to modernize. UWI teacher training department is making an effort to change modalities. In terms of the tertiary level there is a need to improve offerings. We depend on non-nationals for skills. Our people are throwing away opportunities. Foreigners make use of opportunities presented to Antiguan and move ahead. Training - selective employment- we have an idea of what we will accept. Foreigners have a much more entrepreneurial spirit in terms of owning their own business. This is not a bad word. There is a level of satisfaction in owning and controlling a business.

There is no discrimination as to who goes. A significant number of non-Antiguans...

GROUP3

Interview 9

Question 1: *Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?*

No, because I didn't get a scholarship and my parents wanted me to go to England.

Question 2: *In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?*

Yes. Providing you pass the requirements. Once you go through secondary school. What is not accessible are the areas. [Limited offerings] provide only academics. Buisness and commercial, drama, photography etc. are not offered.

Question 3: *Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.*

Selective. From Antigua's point of view we have only [a certain number of seats] so we can't go in from here. So they have to be selective.

Question 4: *What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in*

enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

The government has a big role but they are not doing it. Government should know what the country needs and make provisions for those kinds of things. They are focusing on just a few areas. They should not ignore developmental areas.

Question 5: *Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.*

Yes. The fact that school is compulsory up to the age of sixteen.

Question 6: *How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.*

Good. Three students from Antigua are on honors lists overseas.

Question 7: *What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?*

There is a need to revamp the educational system and offer other areas of learning for individuals who are not academically inclined. Alternatives looked down on. A lot of persons who do A' levels can't find jobs. Up to 3rd form all basics [could be] introduced. Alternative/ Commercial could be introduced in 4th form and accepted like other areas. A School of Performing Arts should be set up. A change of attitude is necessary.

Interview 10

Question 1: *Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?*

No. Financial constraints mainly. I got married.

Question 2: *In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?*

No. The standards are high. Everyone might not meet the scholarship and financial requirements.

Question 3: *Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.*

Selective. They want a particular group education-wise. Only a certain type of student can get in. Loans from the bank were available, but there was no student loan arrangement.

Question 4: *What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?*

Government doesn't seem to have a role. Let me see. They have a 2 year college. They facilitate in that way. They don't participate much. They could make it more accessible financially by arranging for student loans. They offered scholarships which they kept for a chosen few. These were normally connected to people in power. They should make arrangements for people to study abroad. There is a need to have student loan arrangements and offer scholarships again.

Question 5: *Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.*

No, because financially they are not equal, and equality depends on their access to finances.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

High. Education standards are pretty high. We always had a standard to meet. I would rate it high. Early educational opportunities in town schools are equal. Country (rural) schools are OK. People coming from these areas were well-prepared and up to standard.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Government should set up student loans and make (higher education) available to students. This should be a fund accessible to all students who qualify. They should set up distance education and make it accessible for all students who meet certain requirements. An adult program along the lines of the GED should be established to enable students to qualify for college. Requalify for college. Credits should be given for life experience. More information needs to be disseminated about distance education and other opportunities in continued education. Governments need to be less concerned with people well-known to them, and be more concerned with the entire population. The small size of the country may lead to tendencies to be concerned with people who move within their circles. Government needs to ensure that more people are informed and have better access.

Interview 11

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

No. I was offered a scholarship that my parents thought was not well-deserved. I declined it. I had not applied for it, and my parents thought that I was not an eligible candidate. A friend suggested (another college). She was there. (It) was considerably cheaper. [This respondent was not really sure about the cost of the UWI]. The University of Toronto was my first choice. They had (the course I was interested in). Toronto was a big city.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

No. More so perhaps than when I was growing up. There is the Antigua State College that offers two year degrees that allows you to go on to study abroad. The accessibility of the ASC pushes more people to go to higher education. They can now pay for two years instead of four.

The UWI is so separated from everyday Antigua. Its not accessible for people who are not on island campuses.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

The role of the government should be to ensure that as high a percentage as possible get higher education. Should try to get as many people as possible trained to return home. The government should provide scholarships, and bond people to return. Greatest deterrent not difficulty. The idea of living in North America. The lure. T.V. creates an image of life in the USA. The hugeness and bigness of the USA. Some schools lure our students by giving scholarships to "good students", based on "goodwill/ charity/ the need for diversity.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

No. In the past people who were connected to government or people of a particular social class were the ones who went to college. The "poor man in Bolans" did not see himself as having the means to go. This is not Cuba. Where there is capitalism there is no equality. Whose responsibility is it to disseminate information about accessibility of scholarships? Lack of information prevents students from applying for scholarships. In Chicago schools disseminate information in the Freshman year. In the USA everyone is given information. In Antigua access is status-oriented. That's why a lot of kids from poorer areas go to school in the USA. The impression is that the UWI was for uppity-ups.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

The education system is sound enough to prepare all students for higher education. Across the country all students meet the same standards to prepare students for CXC.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

To establish system where parents are advised about options, availability of scholarships and requirements for pursuing higher education.

GROUP4

Interview 16

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

I am presently doing a UWI course. That's the only program offered for teachers that allows me to stay in the state.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

No. In Antigua and Barbuda higher education is very expensive. That throws people off. Having to leave children also throws people off.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Accessible. Its in the region. If I had a choice I would not attend UWI. No other colleges

in the region offer the education program. Its not hard. As long as you have 6 CXC subjects, including English.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

The government plays a big role. They offer a lot of scholarships. Cuba, China, Greece, the State College... the government sponsors these. They supply books. The government bears more than 60% of the expense. They supply more than 60% of the scholarships. Every term, students who study in Cuba get US \$1900.00.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

No. Especially poor people. Everyone has access but because of financial problems everyone does not have access. The government is not doing enough. They could offer scholarships, but they offer scholarships to people who are in the upper social class. The message is sent to the public in an ad hoc way. They don't put it over the media. It is a small channel in which information gets out. Lack of information prevents some people from getting scholarships.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

The Caribbean ranks in the top 5 countries in the world [in education]. There is one curriculum in the [English-Speaking] Caribbean. There is an integrated program. Students who fail the Common Entrance exam can do the youth skills program, or go to ABICE, or the Hotel Training Program. They can excel and become experts in other areas.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Efficient [college going] information dissemination. Give every child an equal opportunity to apply for scholarships. Only one group of people are getting information now. There is no poverty in Antigua. [There is] Laziness in Antigua.

Interview 17

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

For teacher training. The government sent me. The policy is that after two years teachers have to do the training program.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

Yes. College fairs advertise and try to get students and working adults to link up with colleges to be funded by the Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB).

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Selective. Have to have teacher training and/ or A' levels for entry.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

The Board of Education offers scholarships. When you return they should allow you the option to advance. With the CSME on stream they are doing a lot to enhance the educational level (of the country).

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Yes. A lot of colleges advertise and there are a lot of online programs. The banks offer special student loans (15 year). ABIIT offers diploma programs and associate degrees.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Yes. Private and government institutions prepare students for higher education.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Provide more scholarships and target lower income families for financial assistance.

GROUP 5

Interview 12

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

Yes. I was doing an overseas correspondence course. I preferred the class situation.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

After Secondary school you can go to the Antigua State College or go on to the UWI. Everybody knows about it. We also have other educational institutions such as ABIIT and ABICE.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Accessible. Not really. Went as a last resort, because I can work and go to school. In terms of entrance requirements... They just recently introduced the program. You can't leave straight from Secondary school.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

To offer a lot of scholarships regionally and in Malaysia, Cuba and China. If you did medicine they send you to Jamaica to train.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain

your response.

There is no bias as to who gets scholarships. There is a board which chooses. If you are qualified you go to the board. Not sure about the process.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Good. Sometimes students are not focused. Some stay in school from 8:00-3:00.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

No answer.

Interview 13

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

Yes. I candidated for the ordained ministry and received a scholarship.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

Yes. If one can obtain qualifications, funding and loans are available.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Accessible. Selective. Even though its not Harvard there is some measure of selectivity.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

Government has been playing a pretty vital role; sourcing and giving scholarships for students, abroad and regionally. There is an adequate placement, remuneration and incentive program encouraging students to pursue studies. There is scope for business oriented students. College fairs [are held].

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Yes. There are a number of tertiary institutions. Yes, any person once you can obtain funding and qualifications. Lots of places. All you need are subjects at O' level and A' level. Getting these are not difficult. I realize there are a number of persons who finish school. Once you can get funds.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Some work needed in terms of building up infrastructure in some of the government schools. The previous [government] administration did not pay enough attention to this. We are presently trying to lift that standard. At the primary level some work needs to be done. In private [schools] people get what they expect. In public [system] some people are pushing. The government is opening labs; school food program for balanced meals;

the attention span [of students] has increased. Noise has decreased. We are looking at how this translates into grades. A second assessment at grade 5 [is coming on stream?] to see where grade 5 children are. The teacher can have an idea of strengths and weaknesses.

Skills training exists for students who fail the Common Entrance Exam. They are taught other skills and academics at levels in which they can progress. Some effort is made to increase the pass rate of people in the Post-Primary Examination.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

The expansion and development of the State College. The introduction of the 6th Form (Advanced Placement class) in some of the schools. To have a (UWI) campus here to do entire degree program. Expand facilities. This would make it a lot cheaper. [At present] It is cheaper for students in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. We pay all these fees. A lot of people opting to go to ABIIT. [There is] an MBA Executive degree (offered by UWI), and an Msc in Counselling.

Interview 14

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

I attended CAST, which is affiliated with UWI. I got a scholarship. I was in the area of Business Education in which they offered training. I was teaching Business Education.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

No. Perhaps more now than before because Cuba has opened doors. Financially those who can afford are those whose parents can afford.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Highly selective because of requirements. Not sure exactly [what those are]. Had to have a certain amount of GCE [subjects]. Had to do an exam and meet certain criteria. The level is high, especially expectations for CXC. Without 1s and 2s chances are reduced. The advantage [to this system] is that those who get in are top quality, and results are good. The disadvantage is that it cuts down the amount of people who could gain entrance. Some students mature late. Those students are shut out.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

Government is charging taxes. The Education Levy is paid by many people who have no kids. Increase the facilities at the State College. Expand to university level so that students who have no money to go overseas can obtain affordable education. [Promote] the State College to university level to facilitate easy access for students.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

No. Even with scholarships, before Cuba [began offering scholarships], there were unused scholarships in the Board of Education. Certain people were handpicked. Brilliant

students from the lower strata were overlooked.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Dropping terribly. Before we had a very good system from infant 1 to 5. Standards are dropping. Might be the society. Students are rude. Teachers are going through the motions. Teachers are not paid enough. To be a good teacher dedication is required. Teachers are turned off by a lack of response. Government and the Ministry [of Education] should do more in the schools. There is a problem of furniture and books. Students have no books even though they are paying the Education Levy. The tools that are needed are not there. [There should be] an extra push for more computers. More equipment. More hands-on experiences. The Education Levy is a certain percent of the salary. As long as you are employed in Antigua [the Education Levy is deducted from your salary].

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Better trained teachers. Facilities in schools need improvement. Gangs etc. should be eliminated. Try to nip things in the bud (as far as gangs are concerned). Identify [problem] students.

Interview 15

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

Yes. It was convenient. I got a scholarship.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

No. Yes. There is university center (distance) program.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

This is a tricky question. You meet the requirements and you get in. They tend to weed out. It's not for everybody. Most persons graduate because of tenacity.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

The government should make higher education available, but people must meet the requirements. Government should open doors to other institutions. UWI is frustrating. The government does a decent job in providing tertiary education. The University Center is not adequate. They don't look into it. Government should look seriously at what is going on. Is it about esthetics? Is college meeting needs? How can we go forward?

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Nothing is ever equitable. If it's important enough to you, you'll get it. But if you want it, it's there, it's available. The choices are limited. Skidmore is expensive. The Masters degree costs US\$ 1000,00 per (6 credit) semester.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

I don't know if education programs us or socialization. It is a collaborative effort. Compared to Trinidad we don't meet the mark. But a lot of people are participating in higher education.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

[We] can't go the economic route. There has to be some form of intrinsic... We have to sell education. Some form of campaigning.

GROUP6

Interview 18

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

No. There was no UWI until 1948 in Jamaica. At the time I was married and raising children. I would have attended university in the USA if I had not settled down.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

I wouldn't say so. Not to all students. [Some] are unable to make use of the opportunities because [their] surroundings are not sufficiently developed. They are not sufficiently developed socially and educationally to take advantage of it. They are not sufficiently directed that way.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

It is not highly selective, is it? It's reachable to all folk who desire it.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

To make the university [accessible] by giving scholarships and easing their (students) approach in any way they can. They are giving more scholarships now than when I was a child or young woman. Very few scholarships came to Antigua.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Yes. I would feel so. If they attain the required ... We see the picture as it should be... that the chances are there for all on an equitable basis.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Good. I think those who go in generally stay put and graduate. Very few fall out.

Question 7: *What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?*

Improve staffing, making sure that they get teachers who are fully aware of what kids need to get into college.

Interview 19

Question 1: *Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?*

I applied [this year]. Because it's in the region.

Question 2: *In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?*

No. Not accessible to certain people. Some people don't know about applying to other colleges.

Question 3: *Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.*

Selective. It's not my first choice. You must be qualified. More likely to get accepted.

Question 4: *What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?*

Government has been playing a strong role for the past couple of years. There is a two day seminar - college fair - forum. Certain people can go in and get information. The Barbuda Council gives information to Barbudans.

Question 5: *Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.*

Yes. Primary and Secondary education is free.

Question 6: *How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.*

When you go through [this system] there are a lot of opportunities. Most evident is UWI. You have a clear way.

Question 7: *What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?*

Create more awareness. More dissemination of information to Secondary schools. More user-friendly. Create a website. Make it interesting.

Interview 20

Question 1: *Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?*

Yes. The Barbuda Council sent me to do the Certificate in Social Work.

Question 2: *In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?*

Yes. In Barbuda it is. I was on the Board of Education for the [Barbuda] Council. We

made it clear to students that they can go to different places once they pass. I don't think they want it. They don't take advantage of it. Maybe if it was offered in Barbuda they might take it more readily.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Highly selective. It's a good university. The professors do their best.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

They have everything to do with it. In Barbuda it's only the Local Council. The Council has role to play in education. I think they are doing it too. Private firms should help in encouraging young people. They would do better.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Yes. Barbuda young people know about it. We put out ads. We let people know about it. The principal was a member of the education committee.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Students have ISE. Build that up and motivate them.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Interview 21

Question 1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

No. In school no one talked about going to university.

Question 2: In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

Yes. All they have to do is make the effort to go.

Question 3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Accessible. As long as you have the grades and the money.

Question 4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

Government? Nothing. I never knew them to help anybody from Barbuda. They should try to provide more scholarships.

Question 5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Equitable? No. You have to be chummy with the government. It depends on which party you support.

Question 6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Yes. The standard of education is very high.

Question 7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Improvements? A scholarship program. Access to certain types of jobs when you have a certain kind of qualification like computers, engineering, agriculture, mortician, hotel management. They are still bringing in white managers from the USA. Attitudes need to change. The Council gives white people land to farm over citizens who are trained. The Coco Point Hotel has a scholarship fund for Barbudans. (They go back and have nothing to do).

Appendix B

Summary of Interviews by Group – Round 1

Interview Responses by Grouping

Responses - Question #1: Did you attend the UWI? Why or Why not?

Group 1: All members of this group had received full scholarships to attend the UWI. Four of the five participants expressed strong affiliations to the regional institution, and had a high regard for the perceived academic rigor associated with the institution. The fifth participant who had done their undergraduate training at an extra-regional institution, was not particularly impressed by the “rigor“, but cited levels of inefficiency and “nitpicking” as negatives in the institution’s overall program.

Group2: All participants in this group had also received scholarships for the undergraduate work completed at the UWI. This group also expressed a deep respect for the academic level of the institution.

Group 3: Members of this group cited financial constraints and family responsibilities as the main reasons for not attending the UWI. Parental preference for having them pursue higher education in Europe was also a reason cited. One participant refused a scholarship that they considered patronistic.

Group 4: This group received scholarships to pursue an associate degree in education and accepted because of the convenience provided by pursuing studies close to home. This group did not seem to have a particular affiliation for the university. In one case on participant stated that she would not do post-graduate studies at the UWI even if they were giving away scholarships.

Group 5: This group also received scholarships to complete Bachelor degree programs, and were lured by the convenience.

Group 6: This group did not obtain formal degrees from the University. One person in this group completed a certificate program and, reported that a lot of work was squeezed into a small timeframe.

Responses - Question #2 In your opinion is higher education accessible to all citizens?

Group 1: This group responded in a predominantly positive tone. They cited the opportunities for higher education that were available locally, regionally and at extra-regional institutions, and noted that opportunities today were greatly improved from what existed previously. One participant noted that UWI was a “difficult” school, and that students preferred to accept offers from schools abroad. Some participants in this group noted that Cuban, Malaysian, and Grecian scholarships, and funding from the Board of Education had increased accessibility to higher education. This group varied along a continuum from total accessibility to increased accessibility.

Group2: This group responded along a continuum from significant improvement to No. In this group one person saw the lack of accessibility as due to limited scholarship opportunities; one cited the fact that some citizens do not meet the requirements for

entering secondary school, and were therefore unable to advance to tertiary studies. A third person reasoned that some students were unable to meet the high standards required to gain acceptance to institutions of higher education.

Group 3: Two of the three persons in this group responded negatively, citing the inability of some students to meet the high standards required to participate in higher education. The third person (a teacher) stated that higher education was accessible to all students providing they were able to meet the required standards. This candidate cited a curriculum limited to academic, business and commercial offerings provided by (local institutions of) higher education, as a factor inhibiting participation.

Group 4: This group of two was divided. One respondent stated that higher education was made inaccessible because of the costs to the individual. This participant also cited the difficulties involved in traveling to Antigua from Barbuda, and the effect on family responsibilities. The second person saw accessibility as being achieved by the information provided through the job fairs hosted by the Board of Education, and the student loans offered through the Antigua Commercial Bank.

Group 5: This group primarily saw higher education as accessible to all citizens based on increased opportunity and the availability of loans. The sole negative respondent in this group stated that the students who can afford higher education are those whose parents can afford it.

Group 6: This group was perfectly divided. The two answering negatively cited a lack of information and a supportive environment as factors inhibiting participation. The two respondents cited the availability of scholarships. One respondent cited a lack of motivation other parts of students to take advantage of scholarship opportunities

Responses - Question #3: Would you rate the UWI as highly selective, selective or accessible? Explain your response.

Group 1: Three of the five participants stated that the UWI was selective. The other two chose accessible. The first group cited qualifications required for entrance, and noted that entrance is sometimes also based on a quota system. The second group decided that accessibility was guaranteed by the fact that the UWI accepted students with minimum requirements (O' levels/ CXC) subject passes, on the one hand, and that the Antigua State College (ASC) allowed students to complete two years of the degree requirements, requiring students to complete only one year at a college campus.

Group 2: All three respondents decided that the UWI was "selective". Answers ranged from "too closed door" to "reasonably selective". One respondent used a definition of accessible that related to physical location, stating that the UWI was now more accessible with distance education offerings.

Group 3: This group's responses varied. One, opting for "selective" status stated that only a certain type of student was allowed in; one, again opting for "selective" status

cited quota arrangements and the limited capacity of the institution. The third person, using a physical interpretation stated that the UWI was not accessible to persons who were located away from the campus territories.

Group 4: This pair was again divided along selective and accessible lines. The first contended that A (advanced) level passes were necessary for acceptance. The second stated that six CXC (Caribbean Examination Council) passes (including English) were the specified entry requirements.

Group 5: Responses of this group were: highly selective, selective and selective. The person choosing highly selective was not sure about the entry criteria, but considered them stringent. This person stated that level 1 or 2 passes on subjects were required for entry. The selective response was supported by the contention that some measure of selectivity was required for entry

Group 6: This group had distinctly different responses. One person chose highly selective based on their perception of the UWI as a "good university". Another chose selective because candidates who were qualified were more than likely to be accepted. The two other respondents saw the UWI as accessible "to those who desire it" and "those who have the grades and the money".

Responses - Question #4: What, in your opinion, is the role of the Antigua/Barbuda Government in enhancing access to and equity in higher education?

Group 1: This group saw the role of the government as important, and saw higher education as affecting economic development. One participant indicated that the government was not doing enough. That more needed to be done as far as infrastructure and facilities were concerned. There was some concern about the state of secondary and primary education, and one participant expressed the need for the government to pay more attention to these levels to make Antigua and Barbuda educationally competitive with the rest of the world.

Group 2: One person suggested that the government has a role to play in specifying areas in need of trained personnel. The government was seen as having the responsibility of setting the priorities. Educational opportunities were here considered as needing to be based on the developmental needs of the nation. One responsibility of the government was described as assisting higher education candidates financially using various mechanisms already in existence such as low-interest loans the guaranteeing by the government of the economic cost at the UWI; offering loans for a year rather than three or four years, thereby lowering interest payments.

Group 3: The role of government was described as financing the training of as many citizens as possible, and guaranteeing economic returns by bonding students to return to work for a specific number of years. The government's role in establishing and financially supporting the Antigua State College was acknowledged. One participant expressed that they should do more in terms of extending loans to candidates. They

should extend scholarship opportunities extensively. One respondent opined that previously they had kept them for a chosen few. One respondent stated that the government had a big role to play that they were neglecting. This respondent stated that the government needed to expand offerings to include the performing arts and other non-academic areas, in order to develop the talents of all citizens.

Group 4: Both persons in this group thought that the government was fulfilling their role in enhancing access to and equity in higher education by providing scholarships offered by various international governments. The government supplied books, and, according to one respondent, more than 60% of the scholarships. It was reported that the governments supplied students who received scholarships to Cuba with US\$1,900.00 annually.

Group 5: The government's imposition of an Education Levy was recognized as a sign of their commitment to education. Respondents in this group suggested that a commitment to higher education could take the form of increasing the facilities of the Antigua State College, and upgrading it to the level of a university, to enable students to obtain affordable education. The government was seen as needing to pay greater attention to the quality of higher education available to citizens, and to open the doors of other institutions. This candidate said that the UWI was frustrating and the University Center (UWI School of Continuing Studies) not adequate. One participant voiced the opinion that the government played a vital role giving scholarships and sourcing schools for students regionally and extra-regionally, and by holding college fairs and encouraging students to pursue studies in higher education.

Group 6: Two of the four persons in this group opined that the government's role was important and said that they were doing a lot in this regard by holding fairs, giving scholarships. One participant did not think that the government did much in terms of assisting students to access higher education.

Responses - Question #5: Is higher education in Antigua provided equitably to all citizens? Explain your response.

Group 1: The UWI, it was suggested, is an inexpensive school compared to those located extra-regionally. One respondent suggested that in a way opportunities to participate in higher education were equitable, because the Antigua State College was open to all students free of cost. One person voiced the opinion that it was not equitable since most students wanted to study abroad, and that student loans often amounted to \$125,000.00 suggesting that students from wealthy families stood a much better chance of pursuing higher education goals, especially in light of the fact that whole scholarships, previously offered by Canada and the local club of millionaires (Mill Reef) no longer existed. Higher education opportunities were being offered in an increasingly equitable manner. Training being offered by walled or non-walled institutions was increasingly being taken advantage of. Equity, it was opined, was there for those who meet the standards. The equity is compromised for those who don't meet the standards set... and there were many who don't meet the challenge. Very often the social programs established to balance the disadvantage faced by some citizens were seen to represent conspicuous consumption,

and often did not go back to the children, the constituents they were constructed to serve. Some examples cited included the school uniform program and the school meals program.

Group 2: One participant expressed the view that higher education was provided equitably to all citizens, since the government offered free secondary education to all citizens which allowed them, with academic success to access local institutions of higher education up to the Associate Degree level. The other two participants thought that while higher education was accessible it was not available to all citizens on an equitable basis. These respondents suggested that there was a system of patronage which accorded preferential treatment to certain classes of citizens. One respondent made the observation that sometimes people were selected for scholarships and financial assistance based on criteria unrelated to academic achievement.

Group 3: One respondent considered equitability to have been achieved by the compulsory education edict. One stated that in the past people who were connected to the government were the ones who went to college. The second person pointed out that financially people were not equal, and that equality depended on people's access to finances.

Group 4: This group again expressed opposing opinions. One saw the opportunities provided for online education, and the 15 year student loans offered by banks as "equitable provision of higher education services". The second respondent however stated that enough was not done to assist people with financial difficulties to take advantage of higher education opportunities. The opinion was also expressed that that preferential treatment was given to people who were in the upper social class, that messages to the public at large were done in an ad hoc fashion and that information was not publicly available. This prevented some people from being able to apply for scholarships.

Group 5: This group of four was equally divided. Of the two who answered in the negative, one cited mismanagement in the Board of Education. The fact that certain people were handpicked for scholarships, and that often there were scholarships that were not awarded. That brilliant students from the "lower strata" were often overlooked. The second person in this category stated that nothing is ever equitable. That opportunity seekers needed to pursue opportunities in order to obtain them. The two pro respondents stated that there was no bias as to who were awarded scholarships; that the Board of Education made the decision. The sentiments expressed suggested that students who obtained higher education entry requirements received equal consideration for assistance to access higher education.

Group 6: One person in this group cited nepotism as the main channel for awarding assistance to higher education candidates. The other respondents expressed the certainty that the process for awarding scholarships, and places in particular programs was fair.

Responses – Question #6: How would you rate the quality of the preparation provided at primary and secondary school levels in terms of their ability to prepare students to access and persist in tertiary studies.

Group 1: Some respondents stated that government needed to strengthen the primary and secondary education programs, and to guarantee a secondary place for every primary student. This respondent indicated that this was the area where the inequity had its roots. This respondent considered that strengthening the primary sector was the root to improving performance at the secondary and tertiary levels. One respondent stated that the private schools were equipped with technology, which the government schools lacked. And that equipment or the absence of it could have an influence on output. Three respondents in this group suggested that once a student performed well on the Common Entrance Exam they were well on the way to obtaining a good education. No mention was made of the plight of those students who failed to pass this test. The meal and uniform programs were cited as positive reforms that helped children to achieve success in their early academic careers.

Group 2: This group across the board cited the high standard of education offered at primary levels as a plus, and stated that this process was adequate in preparing students to meet the rigors of higher education. The high rate of retention of Caribbean students in local, regional and extra-regional institutions was noted. Respondents generally agreed that in terms of teacher quality schools across the island were equal, however certain high schools received the better prepared students since the students who performed well on the Common Entrance Exam were allowed to select the schools they wished to attend for their Secondary formation. Schools therefore tended to be clustered by class. This fostered inequitable access and created a class system in schooling. One respondent stated that dropout and truancy rates were on the increase, and that literacy rates were falling especially among the male population.

Group 3: This group agreed that the standards were high, and that students who pursued higher education performed adequately; that educational opportunities across the board were generally equal, and that schools were at generally the same standard.

Group 4: This group agreed that private and public institutions at this level were sound in terms of curriculum; and that the Caribbean islands had one integrated curriculum followed throughout the region. It was determined that this factor helped the island to remain educationally “competitive”.

Group 5: This group were less enthused about the strength of the educational program at these levels. Citing a lack of focus of some students; a collaboration between the socialization process and the education programs; falling standards; teacher quality and dedication; lack of books, furniture and equipment these participants stated that compared to other countries of the region Antigua and Barbuda were missing the educational mark.

Group 6: This group generally agreed that the standards at this level were high.

Responses - Question #7: What would you suggest as improvements to achieve the goal of making the higher education sector more accessible and equitable?

Group 1: Suggestions from this group included: improving the structural and instructional aspects of the State College by offering 1st and 2nd year studies and a full faculty; making the economic cost of attending higher education more affordable and so increase the number of students who could avail themselves of higher education; rebuilding the State College to provide a beautiful plant that would encourage and support academic endeavors; make a concerted effort, nationally, to inform students beginning in the first year of high school of college going possibilities, and to motivate students to aim for higher education; provide equipment for schools experiencing shortages; to make significant changes in education in terms of orienting teachers to be able to identify, teach and develop the individual potential of each differently gifted child, also the “genderly” different, along the lines of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

Group 2: This group cited: the need to establish fair procedures for disseminating information about, and awarding scholarships; opening up the Continuing Education department of the UWI in terms of offerings; the improvement of higher education facilities and environment: structural and instructional including the upgrade of teacher skills and teaching modalities as well as offerings.

Group 3: For this group the institution of student loan services for all eligible candidates; the availability of distance education services to expand opportunity for all citizens who meet the requirements; the establishment of a service to provide information about the college going process; the expansion of higher education offerings to include non-traditional subjects such as the performing arts.

Group 4: This group cited: awarding more scholarships; creating a special program to assist low-income families to obtain financial assistance for attending college; the more efficient dissemination of information related to the college and scholarship process far and fairly (to give every child an equal opportunity to apply).

Group 5: For this group the expansion and development of the state college and the introduction of the 6th form in some schools; the expansion of the State College to allow for entire degree programs to be completed in Antigua and Barbuda; more teacher training; improved school facilities; the elimination of gangs in the community; mounting an education campaign to stimulate the youth to develop educational goals.

Group 6: This group cited campaign to inform and motivate students and parents through local organizations such as schools, churches, parent information meetings; the dissemination of college going through secondary schools; creating a web site for this purpose: the use of the government web site for the dissemination of college going information (presented in an interesting manner; equipping staff to serve as resources for students in the college going process; improve the scholarship program by aligning

scholarship offerings with national development goals, and so ensure students have access to jobs on their return.

Appendix C
Interview questions and transcripts - Round 2

MAIN QUESTIONS

1. What is the state of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?

Who participates in higher education?

(What are criteria for admission? Where do most of students come From? What programs exist? Which are most heavily attended? Why?)

To what extent are sub-groups represented in higher education?

(Are all segments of Antiguan and Barbudan society more or less evenly represented?)

What factors prohibit access to higher education?

2. What has been done at official levels to promote access to and equity in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?

What has the national government done to promote access to and equity of access in higher education?

(Are there agreements between higher education and the national government, designed to increase equitable participation in higher education?)

What have institutions of higher education done to promote access and Equity e.g. admissions policies; alignment with other institutions locally, regionally and internationally?

(Have any policies or arrangements been instituted between institutions of higher education, laterally or horizontally, with the intention of furthering the ideals of increased and more equitable access to higher education?)

To what extent have higher education and government collaborated to promote increased and more equitable levels of participation?

(Are there any agreements, proposed or existing legislation, instituted by the national government in collaboration with institutions of higher education, with the objective of improving access to higher education?)

Questions also were posed to individuals based on their areas of expertise.

Interview 22 (CEO Min. of Education)

- 1.1 The people who participate in higher education are primarily persons who work in Education or persons who work in tertiary education institutions.
- 1.2 Many more people are now enrolling in higher education courses than previously. Many persons are happy to get a first degree. Many "non-traditional" groupings are now becoming involved in pursuing higher education. The Introduction of the CSME (Caribbean Single Market and Economy) is now motivating more people to seek higher education. Many people who have been in the work force for a long time are going back to school.
- 2.1 Antigua should adopt Dominica's mission which is to aim for one graduated per household. To promote equity and access the national govt. (of Antigua and Barbuda) has instituted the NSFL (National Student Loan Fund) by which govt. has allocated 2 million dollars to higher education to assist nationals in pursuing first and second degrees. Candidates can borrow a maximum of \$50,000.00. This is done through the Ministries of Finance and Education. 85 candidates from Antigua have already benefited. There is also a Scholarship Grant which allows lecturers who work at the Antigua State College to get financial assistance in the form of a loan to do Masters and Doctoral degrees. The aim is for the ASC to become a degree granting institution. **THE STATE COLLEGE IS LOOKING ABOUT LEGISLATION TO MAKE IT INTO A FULL DEGREE GRANTING INSTITUTION.**
- 2.2 (To promote access and equity in higher education) some institutions are twinned with other institutions in the United States. ABIIT does and associate in computer networking and is twinned with PACE. There is a 2+2 agreement. (2 years at ABIIT followed by 2 years at PACE. The ASC is twinned with Okanatan University in Canada. There is an internship program where Okanatan students can come down and observe things in Antigua and go back, and vice versa. The Board of Education works with Midwestern (university) to lower fees for students from Antigua and Barbuda. A discount is offered.
- 2.3 The ASC is govt. owned as well as ABIIT. The UWI is owned by the govts. of the Caribbean so, to this extent, higher education is government controlled in Antigua and Barbuda. Different arrangements help to promote access and equity in higher education. For example some students were granted scholarships to the Polytechnic of New York. 75% of fees are free for students, Parents pay 25% of the fees. Ten students went to this program. It is too early to speak (about the success of this program). We are aiming for Universal Higher Education by 2010.

Interview 23 (Director, Measurement and Evaluation Unit, BOE)

- 2.1 (From perspective of measurement and evaluation unit) the Board of Education has in place a system where students who fail the Common Entrance Exam in the 6th grade, who were at that point previously excluded from the system, now have an opportunity to continue their education. These students now go on the 7th, 8th and 9th grades (the Junior Secondary Section) at the end of which they take the Junior Secondary Exam.

2.2 Students can continue their education. They can also go on the ABICE which has a more or less open door policy for students. Students who have not gained traditional college entrance requirements now can go to ABICE and take courses which can lead to associate degrees, from which they can continue to pursue Bachelor's degrees.

2.3 ABICE, ABIIT and the ASC open doors for students formerly excluded from higher education. These are all govt. related institutions. ASC is poised to become a full degree-granting institution. This should open the door for more Antiguan and Barbudans to get college degrees.

Interview 24 (President of ABIIT)

Access is occurring across the board, rich and poor... Those who excel and those who don't. People who have money are (still in the majority of) those who go (to institutions of higher education).

2.1 To help promote access and equity of access to higher education the Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology (ABIIT) was established by the national government in 2001, as an associate degree granting institution. The course offerings have expanded to Finance and other areas.

2.2 The admissions policy is "Whosoever will". (Indicating that there is a more or less open door policy). ABIIT is a government school. The fees are reasonable, E.C.\$ 600.00 (per semester?) Financial assistance to attend this school is available in the form of scholarships awarded by the Board of Education, and loans available through the loan program. Up to \$50,000.00 is available to students who wish to pursue higher education. -The school is linked to North American institutions. However the institution is not linked to the University of the West Indies (UWI). The programs offered are not along the UWI line.

2.3 ABIIT is an institution established by the government. It is therefore a government school. It is one and the same. (Government collaboration in this instance is indisputable).

Interview 25 (Official UWI School of Continuing Education)

2.1 To promote access and equity in higher education the University of the West Indies has gone on line. People can access the university's web page on line. Not aware of any legislations which exist to promote access to and equity in higher education. (The UWI school of continuing education's presence on island is itself considered a measure of extending access (and equity of access) to higher education in the Caribbean. These "Extra-Mural" departments, as they were once termed, were established to allow)

2.2 The UWI School of continuing education is a branch of the University of the West Indies. There are presently approximately some 280 or so persons enrolled in Associate

Degree programs. (There are programs not based solely on academic credentials, and which accept students based on experience working in the public sector).

2.3 Govt. and higher education have collaborated to the extent that the government pays part of the tuition of government employees. They have also extended this to employees of the private sector.

Interview 26 (Instructor, ASC Teachers' Education Program)

In the UWI program, we do the first two years of a three year program. We have graduated hundreds of students. That in itself is a start. The development of the infrastructure is necessary. This has not grown at the same pace. The facilities are the same as 20 years ago. The question is the level.

The infrastructure of the State College is not growing. If the infrastructure was developing at the same pace more students would have graduated. Students pay \$3,500. The political will is lacking. St. Lucia's infrastructure is more advanced. There are better facilities. At the ASC over the past 20 years there has not been much progress. The government has not put enough funds into it. Students have done much with so little. The importance of education is not supported by commitment.

Better paying jobs provide the incentive for more people to enter higher education. Many post-graduate distance programs exist now. Many people, (who work in the banks etc.) are engaging in higher education, not only within UWI but overseas. Interest has grown....

ADMISSIONS POLICY

The (UWI) program was to (infuse) access and affordability. Government has invested in program. Cost of local program is \$3,500.00 (Eastern Caribbean currency) per year. For attendance at the Cave Hill campus it costs \$500.00 (Barbados currency) per year. The (cost at the ASC) is \$800.00 per year, plus \$2,600.00 for the purchase of books. When the program started students were provided with books. Now students buy books.

Most Social Science programs (at the ASC) are for a duration of two years. For (Natural) Science the first year program is offered. For Computer Science the first two years. Computer Science (is twinned) with Accounting and Management.

When students go to Cave Hill (UWI Campus in Barbados) they do well.

UWI offers a part-time program (Continuing Education Program) which facilitates the workforce. The ASC is more rigorous. Two A levels are required. Quality assurance is required. Outside of the UWI there are a number of distance programs. University of Leicester, University of Manchester.

Interview 27

Government awards scholarships to deserving students. Students have received scholarships to China, Mexico and Malaysia and other countries. Students can apply for a loan through the National Student Loan program. Students can borrow up to \$50,000.00. Institutions of higher education in Antigua and Barbuda are all publicly supported. Most higher education in Antigua and Barbuda is run by the government. Collaboration between higher education and the government is easy.

Interview 28

There are two or three (Spanish speaking students) in (the Antigua Girl's) High School. They are Santo Dominican. (They have been a) good ten years or so in the population. They perform the same as other students.

Names are not Spanish in many cases. One girl, I was surprised when they told me that she was Spanish. The teacher told me that she was doing well in Spanish because she was Spanish (of Dominican heritage). Her name is English. Some have English names so you can't tell they are Spanish.

(After discussion this informant determined that perhaps the Spanish speaking students were indeed a group in need of support in relation to accessing higher education.

Interview 29

Spanish speaking students make up approximately 5-8% of the primary and secondary (school-going) population, and about 15-20% of the wider population. There is a program run by private individuals. They have multilingual courses: Italian, German, Spanish. There is a need for an English as a Second Language program. Officers say there is a need because students suffer.

On the Common Entrance exam some would do well, I don't think most do well. You may find one or two who might excel. I think some are struggling.

They would go to PM (Princess Margaret School) more than Grammar School of High School. A lot of them go to Graysfarm, Greenbay, Nut Grove, Clare Hall, Jennings, Ottos and All Saints Schools. Some take work seriously. Most are from lower income brackets. Their parents come to seek a better life. Some are really struggling. Some of them pull through. They are the descendants of Antiguans. They keep sending for family and relatives and friends.

In A level classes maybe some of them are doing commercial (business skills). In five or six years their numbers will increase. The whole population will be very much mixed.

Follow-up interview

(After checking with teachers of a number of primary schools).

In the schools of 13 teachers who I asked there are only a few in each class. Greenbay primary has a lot of Spanish speaking students. There are some Spanish speaking students who do pretty well. Many often from the actual environment. There are some who do very well.

In the case of Clare Hall Secondary the Head Boy came in from a Spanish speaking country and worked hard, did well, and was appointed Head Boy. He has done well from Spanish speaking descent.

Because of language barrier..... Some assimilate quickly, pick up pretty easily. May not do as well as.... There is a possibility that more may tend to drop out or not do as well as others. Those that may drop out may be more than those who stay. Only 203 (nos. enrolled?)

Ottos Comprehensive, Greenbay, Princess Margaret (schools where there is likely to be a larger population of Spanish speaking students).

A lot of Spanish speaking students would not pass to go to Grammar School or High School, so they would be in other schools. I don't think many of them have done as well to pass in the top 60 (students allowed to choose the high school they wish to attend). Some don't have Spanish names. I have examined some students and they don't have.... [Spanish names].

I would venture to say every school would have some Spanish students.

Interview 30

A lot of them (Spanish speaking students) probably drop out of the (school) system before they reach secondary school. There is a large population of Spanish speakers in the community at large. The number does not seem to be reflected in the school population. There should be more Spanish speaking children in the schools. They have a problem with English. We need to have Spanish speaking teachers to teach these children. The difference with the Chinese is that they see to it that their children work hard.

Interview 31

There is not a big Spanish speaking population in the school system. (Indicated that there was no need for special bilingual or English language instruction for this population). A lot of the children from Antigua do not really speak English at home. They speak dialect. They all need to learn English as a second language. A lot of them are born in Antigua so they speak English like the Antiguan children. They don't perform educationally any worse than the Antiguan children (so no need to target them for special services).

Interview 32

Over the past five years student enrollment in Distance Education program has fluctuated between 170 and 184 individuals. This number is not substantial. I could be larger. The problem is one of cost of tuition. Presently courses are \$650.00 and are going up to \$810.00 later in 2009. There is a face to face Associate degree program which has an enrollment of 45 individuals. This program is in Public sector management skills.

Appendix D

List of Government Schools in Antigua and Barbuda

All Saints Secondary School
Antigua Girls High School
Antigua Grammar School
Bendals Primary School
Bethesda Primary School
Bolans Primary School
Buckleys Primary School
Cedar Grove Primary School
Clare Hall Secondary School
Cobbs Cross Primary School
Five Islands Primary School
Freetown Primary School
Glanvilles Primary School
Golden Grove Primary School
Green Bay Primary School
Holy Trinity School
Industrial School for the Blind
Infant Pedagogic Center
Irene Williams Primary School
JT Ambrose Primary School
Jennings Primary School
Jennings Secondary School
John Hughes Primary School
Liberta Primary School
Mary E. Pigott Primary School
McChesney George School
Newfield Primary School
New Winthropes Primary School
Old Road Primary School
Ottos Comprehensive School
Pares Primary School
Parham Primary School
Potters Primary School
Princess Margaret School
Sea View Farm Primary School
TN Kimon Primary School
Technical and Vocational Training Center

Appendix E
Research questions, results and recommendations

<i>Research Questions and subsections</i>	<i>Results</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
1. What is the State of Higher Education(HE) in Antigua and Barbuda? (AB)		
1.1 Who Participates?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -While there is increased participation in higher education, access is not equitable -Regional socio-economic disparities are reflected in rates of education achievement and potential for accessing higher education -Those participating in higher education are in the main those who possess the economic, social and cultural capital to negotiate their way through the system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expand higher education offerings to accommodate different skill sets and areas of interest. - Devise programs for motivating students to pursue HE early in school career. -Improve early pedagogy and curriculum. Orient teachers to teaching the "differently gifted". -Make distance ed. available to all citizens
1.2 Are sub-groups equally represented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sub groups are not equally represented -There are some groups in AB who have limited access to HE These include: -Residents of Barbuda, rural dwellers, low SES, the disabled, older people, males, Spanish speaking population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create special economic program to assist disadvantaged groups to facilitate their participation in HE -Encourage participation by aligning scholarships to jobs. -Consider implementing English as a second language and/ or bilingual education to assist transition of Spanish speaking population.
1.3 What factors prohibit access to higher education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Structural, attitudinal and organizational factors. These include Space, Cost, small population, attitudes, historical factors, excessive rigor, lack of information -problems assoc. with early educational deficits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rebuild ASC. Provide a beautiful facility. -Invest in adequate quantities of modern ICT equipment and instructional supplies. -CEE and JSE be used to plan interventions for needy students. Schooling follow uninterrupted sequence through high school. -Efficient dissemination of college going info. -The establishment of a general equivalency diploma.
2. What has been done at official levels to promote access and equity in higher education in Antigua and Barbuda?		
2.1 What has the national government done to promote access and equity in Antigua and Barbuda ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Most gain at primary and secondary levels: Universal primary education, the estab. of Primary and Secondary schools, the Education Levy used to fund education programs -At the HE level some institutions were established: ABICE, ABIIT, ASC, Hotel Training Institute. A National Loan Program was instituted, govt. has also sourced a number of scholarships. - Problem exists in terms of planning. Tertiary often neglected in favor of primary and secondary divisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establishment of a higher education registry to monitor, plan and coordinate activities of sector. - Make arrangements to participate in international tests such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) to establish the level of Antigua and Barbuda's educational performance relative to the international community.
2.2 What have institutions of higher education done to promote access and equity in higher education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While there have been some gains e.g. distance ed. ABICE skills training and ABIIT technology education. -Institutions lack arrangement for transfer of credits to create opportunities for further educational growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Estab. of inter-institutional articulation and transfer of credit arrangements in local HE sector to facilitate vertical and horizontal alignment of programs. This would enable a smooth transition from one phase of education to another, and from one institution to the next.
2.3 How have government and higher education institutions collaborated to promote access and equity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have created various institutions to expand access. But since HE is govt. controlled, and falls under civil service sector, they are subject to certain limitations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASC be upgraded to full university status, as an independent and autonomous institution able to source funds and undertake research with intellectual freedom.